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Special Operations Forces Language and Culture Needs Assessment Project: Mission- specific Use of Interpreters



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“Any mission that we want to be successful on, we have to have an interpreter.”

Special Operations Forces (SOF) Operator, 5th Special Forces Group (SFG)

This statement is indicative of the current state of affairs in the SOF community. The ability to communicate is important to SOF mission success both inside and outside their area of responsibility (AOR; *Inside AOR Use of Language*, Technical Report #2010011010; *Outside AOR Use of Language*, Technical Report #2010011011). Without effective communication, mission success could be compromised by misunderstandings or failures to convey the appropriate information that may lead to lost or damaged rapport. Although language training is provided to many SOF operators to develop organic language capability on SOF tactical elements, they often deploy before optimum proficiency can be fully achieved or deploy outside their assigned AOR to locations where their trained language is not used. For example, Special Forces (SF) operators’ current graduation standard is a 1/1 (i.e., 1 in speaking and 1 in participatory listening) on the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) scale; however, most SF mission tasks require a 2/2 or higher proficiency level for full performance (*US Army Special Forces Language Proficiency Requirements Needs Assessment*, Technical Report #2010010623).

To compensate for a lack of mission-relevant language proficiency, SOF operators often use interpreters. This report describes interpreter use by SOF operators on missions both inside and outside their AOR. Specifically, this report describes the current reality of interpreter dependence and the impact of this dependence on missions from the perspective of SOF operators. Policymakers and SOF leaders can use this information to determine if the current level of interpreter dependence is acceptable and, if necessary, inform policy change.

Overview of Findings

Overall, findings indicate that the use of interpreters is common on SOF missions both inside (69% of SOF operators) and outside (91% of SOF operators) the AOR. Furthermore, most SOF operators reported using interpreters *every day*.

“The vast majority of us, we’re using interpreters 24/7”

SOF Operator, 5th SFG

The most common types of interpreters used by SOF operators both inside and outside the AOR were Category I (CAT I) interpreters (i.e., local hire indigenous personnel, not vetted; or a US citizen not vetted) and Category II/III (CAT II/III) interpreters (i.e., US citizen with a secret or top-secret clearance). The type of interpreter used on missions was similar between inside and outside AOR deployments. However, the types of interpreters used varied somewhat depending on the primary SOF core task:

- Both CAT I and CAT II/III interpreters were most frequently used on Foreign Internal Defense (FID), Direct Action (DA), and Unconventional Warfare (UW) missions.
- CAT I interpreters were most commonly used for Civil Affairs Operations (CAO) missions
- CAT II/III interpreters were most commonly used for Military Information Support Operations (MISO).¹

¹ Formally, Psychological Operation (PSYOP) SOF core task

The current findings indicate interpreters are important to mission success. Most SOF operators rated interpreters as *very important* to mission success whether deployed inside or outside their AOR.

Focus group moderator: "So reliance on interpreters was really key there. So without interpreters there would be no way to--?"

SOF operator: "It would be difficult; I'd say impossible."

SOF Operator, 95th Civil Affairs Brigade (CAB)

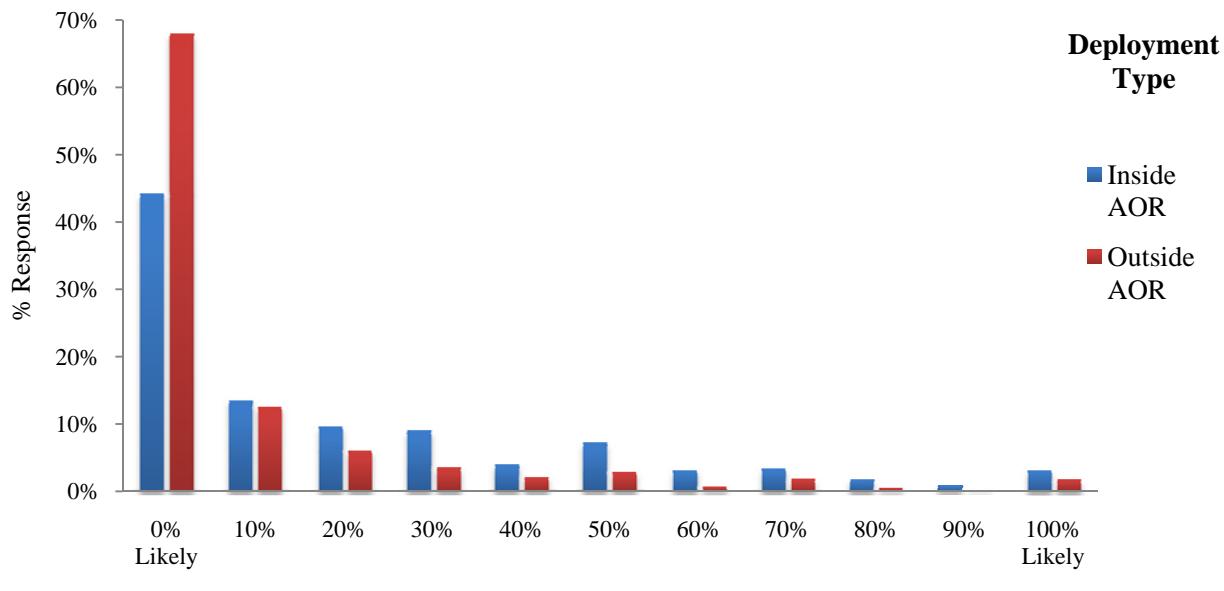
Further, SOF operators reported they were *very dependent* on their interpreters for mission success. This dependence differed across SOF core tasks, specific mission language requirements, and self-rated proficiency levels. In general, personal interpreter dependence was highest for SOF operators on outside AOR missions, for missions requiring SOF operators to perform speaking tasks, and for SOF operators with lower proficiency.

"I'd say interpreters are absolutely essential"

SOF Operator, 5th SFG

The following figure highlights the importance of and dependence on interpreters for mission success. Sixty-eight percent of SOF operators whose most recent deployment was outside their AOR indicated they were 0% confident that they would have been successful on their mission without an interpreter.

Forty-four percent of SOF operators whose most recent deployment was inside their AOR were 0% confident that they would have succeeded in their mission without the use of an interpreter. These findings suggest that SOF operators perceive mission success to be, in large part, dependent on interpreters.



Note. Only SOF operators who indicated the use of an interpreter on their most recent mission are included in the figure. Inside AOR deployed $n = 466$. Outside AOR deployed $n = 433$.

To more fully understand the conditions under which interpreter use and dependence are greatest, several factors were investigated including: (1) SOF operators' receipt of pre-deployment language training, (2) self-rated speaking and listening proficiency, (3) difficulty of the target language, (4) the type of language tasks required for the mission, and (5) the primary SOF core task of the mission. Accordingly, the following relationships were found:

- SOF operators who completed pre-deployment language training were less likely to use interpreters both for inside and outside AOR deployments. For inside AOR deployments, those SOF operators who received pre-deployment language training reported their team used interpreters less frequently, were less dependent on interpreters (both at the personal and team level), reported interpreters were less important to mission success, and were more confident they could have achieved mission success *without* an interpreter.
- SOF operators who were more proficient in the target language used interpreters less frequently.
- SOF operators who deployed to regions where more difficult languages are spoken reported more frequent interpreter use.
- On deployments for which speaking in the target language was important to mission success, SOF operators were more dependent on interpreters compared to deployments requiring other language skills (e.g., passive listening or reading).
- SOF operators who deployed inside their AOR for MISO missions were less dependent on interpreters than SOF operators deploying for other SOF core tasks.

Regarding SOF operators' attitudes toward interpreter use, SOF operators who participated in focus groups were generally uncomfortable with the level of their team/tactical element's reliance on interpreters. Focus group participants discussed negative experiences with interpreters including, interpreters not being familiar with military terminology, interpreters unwilling to work, and slowing the task down. The most frequently discussed negative experience with interpreters was the lack of trust with the interpreters used, as expressed by the SOF operator below.

“...having to rely on interpreters, for the most part, in my experience anyway, heavily on interpreters...it is definitely not a good thing when ...you’re placing a lot of trust in someone...you never really know.”

SOF Operator, 19th SFG

Focus group participants also indicated a desire to reduce their reliance on interpreters by placing more focus on personal language capability and language training.

“I’d say ... have at least everybody on the team have a basic understanding of language, and be able to carry themselves in their own conversation, because when it comes down to who’s taking over a specific program, then you’ve got to go and brief that program to the host nation, and if you always bring around the interpreter... [they think] well, why don’t I just go to him rather than talking to you, because they’ll get the same thing...[I] just want to talk to him from now on, don’t even want to see you.”

SOF Operator, 4th Military Information Support Group (MISG)²

² Formally 4th Psychological Operations Group (POG)

Participants provided suggestions on improving the quality of interactions with interpreters. For instance, SOF operators recommended that training be provided on how to use your interpreter correctly and effectively. The *Interpreter Ops: Multi-Service Reference Manual for Interpreter Operations* (2004), is one reference that provides techniques for the effective use of interpreters. The manual outline topics including: (1) selecting and hiring interpreters; (2) how to orient and train interpreters; (3) how to use interpreters for different interactions. More details about interpreter training received by SOF operators is available in the *General Use of Interpreters* report (Technical Report #2010011007).

“The big thing obviously essential to have is learning how to use them properly, and ensuring that they’re doing the right thing”

SOF Operator, 95th CAB

Overall, these findings indicate that interpreters are frequently relied upon to meet the language-related mission requirements, and this reliance is due to the fact that SOF operators are not equipped with the language capability necessary to carry out their missions successfully. While reliance on interpreters varies to some extent across SOF tactical elements and mission contexts, the general feeling among SOF operators is that reliance on interpreters for mission-critical tasks should be reduced. SOF leadership must determine if the current state of interpreter dependence is acceptable. If dependence on interpreters for mission success is not acceptable, then SOF leadership must take the necessary steps to improve organic language capability.

Findings in this report indicated several factors that produce reduced reliance on interpreters, such as providing pre-deployment language training to all SOF operators regardless of deployment type (i.e., inside or outside the AOR). Additionally, a greater training emphasis placed on increasing SOF operators' speaking proficiency levels would also reduce the need for interpreter use. If continued reliance on interpreters is probable, the effectiveness with which they are used in the field can be improved by training SOF operators in the selection, training, and use of interpreters in relevant mission contexts. The reality is that interpreters will always be necessary to some degree, especially on outside AOR deployments. However, the question is how dependent does SOF want to be on interpreters for mission success. SOF leaders can take actions to improve the organic language capability and the effectiveness of interpreter use, in order to reduce the dependence on interpreters for mission success.

To provide a broader context for these findings (which focus on SOF operators' use of interpreters for specific missions), more perspectives on the general use of interpreters within the SOF community are needed. For a more comprehensive account of interpreter use within SOF, findings from this report will be integrated with the following *Tier I* reports: *General Use of Interpreters* (Technical Report #2010011007) and *09L Use in the SOF Community* (Technical Report #2010011014) into the *Tier II* report *Use of Interpreters*. The *Use of Interpreters* report will further address the issues presented in these reports and provide general recommendations.

This report is part of a larger project titled, *2009 SOF Language and Culture Needs Assessment (LCNA) Project*. See Appendix A of this report for additional details about the SOF LCNA Project. For questions or more information about the Special Operations Forces Language Office (SOFLO) and this project,

please contact Mr. Jack Donnelly (john.donnelly@socom.mil). For specific questions related to data collection or reports associated with this project, please contact Dr. Eric A. Surface (esurface@swa-consulting.com) or Dr. Reanna Poncheri Harman (rpharman@swa-consulting.com) with SWA Consulting Inc.

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SECTION I: REPORT AND PROJECT OVERVIEW

Mission-Specific Use of Interpreters Report Purpose

The ability to communicate is important to Special Operations Forces (SOF) mission success both inside and outside the area of responsibility (AOR; *Inside AOR Use of Language*, Technical Report #2010011010; *Outside AOR Use of Language*, Technical Report #2010011011). For instance, without the ability to communicate, there may be misunderstandings that can have negative consequences on the mission and may lead to lost or damaged rapport. Policy in the SOF community indicates the importance of striving “...to promote greater and more in-depth language and cultural expertise within SOF by expanding...overall [language] capability” (USSOCOM M 350-8, 2009, p.1). Thus, language training is provided to many SOF operators to develop organic language capability on SOF tactical elements. Unfortunately, given the high demand for SOF trained professionals overseas, SOF operators often deploy before the optimum proficiency can be fully achieved. Further, SOF operators often deploy outside their assigned AOR to locations where their trained language is not used. SOF teams/tactical elements³ without sufficient organic language capability often use interpreters to overcome communication barriers and accomplish mission tasks.

The *Mission-Specific Use of Interpreters* report provides SOF leadership and policymakers with information to determine whether the current use of and dependence on interpreters in the SOF community is acceptable. If the current state of affairs is not acceptable, then SOF leadership can take the necessary steps to improve organic language capability on SOF tactical elements. Thus, this report describes findings related to SOF operators’ perceptions of interpreter use on missions while deployed either inside or outside their AOR. This report examines the frequency and types of interpreters used (e.g., CAT I or CAT II/III), dependence on interpreters, and the importance of interpreters to mission success. Additionally, this report examines comments from the field regarding SOF operators’ experiences with interpreters while deployed.

This report is divided into six sections with several supporting appendices. The report sections are as follows:

- Section II examines interpreter use on deployments, and the type of interpreters used. This section reports the prevalence of interpreter use across a variety of SOF operator groups (e.g., components), mission contexts (e.g., core SOF task), and operational conditions (e.g., operator language proficiency). Section II provides a high-level overview of the prevalence of interpreter use in the SOF community.
- Section III describes SOF operator reliance on interpreters, including the frequency of use and dependence across SOF operator groups, mission contexts, and operational conditions. This section complements the previous section by describing how frequently SOF operators use interpreters and the extent to which interpreters are relied upon in the field under various contexts and conditions.

³ For the remainder of this report, “team” will be used to refer to both deploying teams and tactical elements.

- Section IV addresses the importance of interpreters to mission success. This section describes SOF operators' perceptions of the importance of interpreters to mission success under a number of contexts and conditions. Section IV complements previous sections (which address the prevalence of interpreter use) by establishing the necessity of interpreters to SOF teams.
- Section V provides comments from focus group participants regarding positive and negative experiences with interpreters, and additionally, provides suggestions from SOF operators on future interpreter use. This section complements the "quantitative" findings from previous sections by offering first-hand accounts of SOF operators' experiences using interpreters in the field and operators' perceptions of interpreter use in general.
- Section VI provides overall conclusions based on an integration of findings from Sections II through V.
- Appendix A details the *2009 SOF Language and Culture Needs Assessment (LCNA) Project*.
- Appendix B presents the methodology for the report, including participants, measures, and analyses.
- Appendices C through E provides more detailed survey responses to the items by SOF component, Army SOF (ARSOF) type, and the organization level responses from the United States Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) in table format.

LCNA Project Purpose

The Special Operations Forces Language Office (SOFLO) commissioned the *2009 Language and Culture Needs Assessment (LCNA) Project* to gain insights on language and culture capability and issues across the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM). The goal of this organizational-level needs assessment is to inform strategy and policy to ensure SOF personnel have the language and culture skills needed to conduct their missions effectively. Data were collected between March and November 2009 from personnel in the SOF community, including SOF operators and leaders. Findings, gathered via focus groups and a web-based survey, will be presented in a series of reports divided into three tiers. The specific reports in each of these tiers will be determined and contracted by the SOFLO. *Tier I* reports focus on specific, limited issues (e.g., *Inside AOR Use of Language*). *Tier II* reports integrate and present the most important findings across related *Tier I* reports (e.g., *Use of Language and Culture on Deployment*) while including additional data and analysis on the topic. One *Tier III* report presents the most important findings, implications, and recommendations across all topics explored in this project. The remaining *Tier III* reports present findings for specific SOF organizations [e.g., Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC), Special Forces (SF) Command]. Two foundational reports document the methodology and participants associated with this project. Report topics are determined by the SOFLO and are subject to change.

Relationship of Mission Specific Use of Interpreters to the LCNA Project

Three *Tier I* reports describe the use of interpreters across the SOF community. One report, the *General Use of Interpreters* (Technical Report #2010011007), describes the overall use and effectiveness of interpreters. The *09L Use in the SOF Community* (Technical Report #2010011014), describes the use of the relatively new type of interpreter: 09L. The 09L program started in 2006, and uses native speakers of

Middle Eastern languages (e.g., Arabic) attached to some U.S. Army SOF teams. The current report, *Mission Specific Use of Interpreters*, is unique in that it provides a narrowly focused but thorough account of interpreter dependence for specific SOF core tasks including the frequency of use, dependence, and importance of interpreters to mission success.

Findings from this report will be integrated with the following *Tier I* reports: *General Use of Interpreters* (Technical Report #2010011007) and *09L Use in the SOF Community* (Technical Report #2010011014) into the *Tier II* report *Use of Interpreters*.

SECTION II: INTERPRETER USE

This section documents the number of SOF operators⁴ who reported using interpreters on their most recent mission, and the types of interpreters used. Differences in reported interpreter use are also examined between deployments inside and outside the AOR, between specific SOF core tasks, and between SOF components.

Research Questions

This section addresses the following questions:

- To what extent are interpreters used on missions?
- What factors are related to interpreters being used more frequently?
- What types of interpreters are used?

Main Findings

SOF operators recently deployed either inside or outside their AOR indicated using interpreters frequently on their missions. SOF operators deployed outside their AOR reported interpreter use more frequently (91%) than SOF operators deployed inside their AOR (69%).

Results indicate that interpreter use varies depending on several factors, including the reported level of self-rated proficiency, receipt of pre-deployment language training, difficulty level of the SOF operators' assigned language, SOF component, USASOC organization, and SOF core task:

- Interpreter use was most prevalent for SOF operators who reported low proficiency.
- Interpreter use was most prevalent for SOF operators who had not received pre-deployment language training.
- Interpreter use was most prevalent for SOF operators who were assigned to difficult languages to learn.
- Within components, SOF operators in the Naval Special Warfare Command (NAVSPECWARCOM or WARCOM) were the most likely to use interpreters inside their AOR, while the Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command (MARSOC) used interpreters most commonly outside their AOR. However, these results should be interpreted with caution due to small samples for both of these groups.
- Within USASOC, 3rd Special Forces Group (SFG) and 5th SFG were most likely to use interpreters inside their AOR, while U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School (USAJFKSWCS or SWCS) staff and 5th SFG used interpreters most commonly outside their AOR.
- For SOF core tasks, SOF operators conducting Direct Action (DA) or Unconventional Warfare (UW) missions were the most likely to use interpreters for inside or outside AOR deployments. There was a larger difference between use of interpreters on Foreign Internal Defense (FID),

⁴ When referring to SOF operators, this report focuses only on the SOF operators who participated in the survey and responded to these specific items. Please see Appendix B (Methodology) and the *Participation Report* (Technical Report #2010011003) for more information about survey respondents.

Civil Affairs Operations (CAO) and Military Information Support Operations (MISO)⁵ with inside AOR deployments always indicating less interpreter use than outside AOR deployment missions.

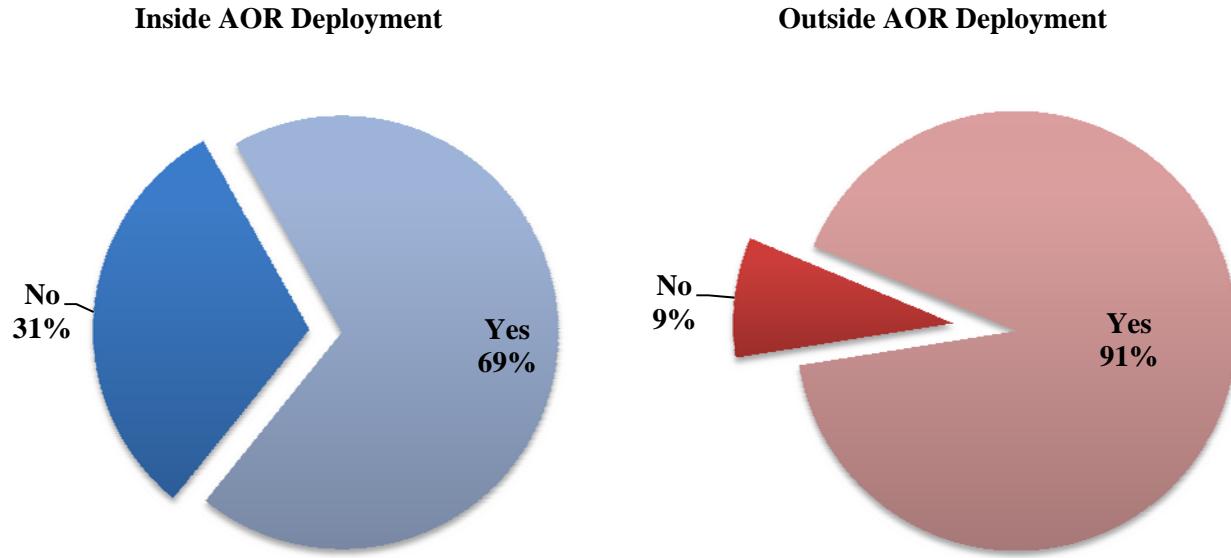
Overall, the type of interpreter used inside and outside the AOR was similar. SOF operators reported using both Category I (CAT I) interpreters (i.e., Local hire indigenous personnel, not vetted; or a US citizen not vetted) and Category II/III (CAT II/III) interpreters (i.e., US citizen with a secret or top secret clearance) on missions. Similar trends between inside and outside AOR deployment interpreter use were also found among SOF core tasks. Both CAT I and CAT II/III interpreters were most frequently used on FID, DA, and UW missions. Additionally, SOF operators reported that CAT I interpreters were most commonly used on CAO missions, while CAT II/III interpreters were most commonly used on MISO missions.

Detailed Findings

Interpreter Use on Missions

On recent inside and outside AOR deployments, most SOF operators indicated using interpreters (Figure 1, p. 12). SOF operators deployed outside their AOR more frequently reported interpreter use (91%) than SOF operators deployed inside their AOR (69%). More frequent use on outside AOR deployments was expected as most SOF operators receive language training for a language inside their AOR, resulting in team language capability being generally higher for inside AOR deployments.

Figure 1. Interpreter Use Inside and Outside AOR Deployments



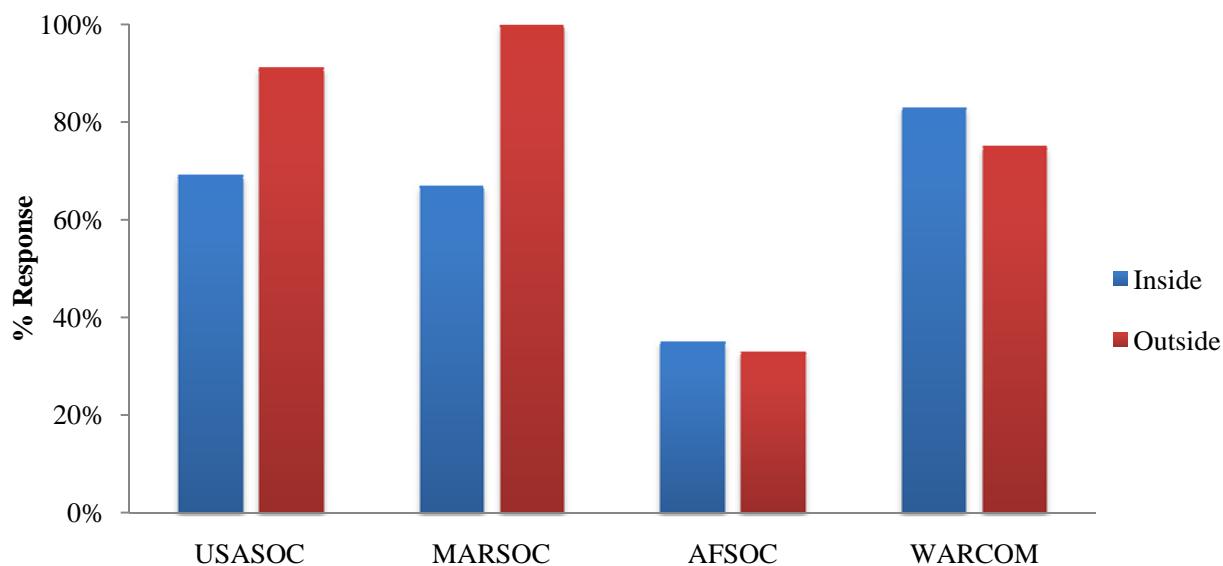
Note. Inside AOR deployment $n = 681$. Outside AOR deployment $n = 477$.

⁵ Formerly Psychological Operations (PSYOP)

Factors Related to Interpreter Use

Interpreter use depends on several factors. First, interpreter use varies among SOF components (Figure 2, p. 13). On inside AOR deployments, SOF operators in WARCOM reported the highest percentage of interpreter use (83%, $n = 6$) compared to the other components. On outside AOR deployments, MARSOC reported the highest percentage of interpreter use (100%, $n = 2$). The smallest percentage of interpreter use both inside and outside the AOR was reported by Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC; 35%, $n = 17$ and 33%, $n = 6$ respectively). These results should be interpreted with caution due to the small number of respondents from these components.

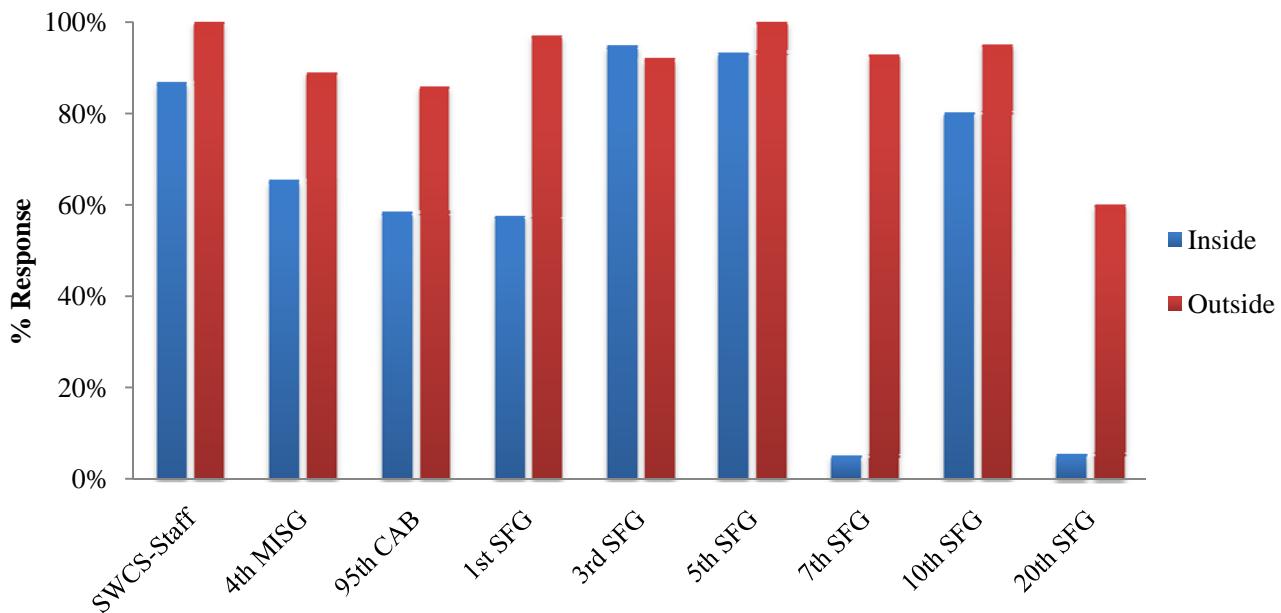
Figure 2. Interpreter Use by SOF Component



Note. Sample sizes are presented in Appendix C.

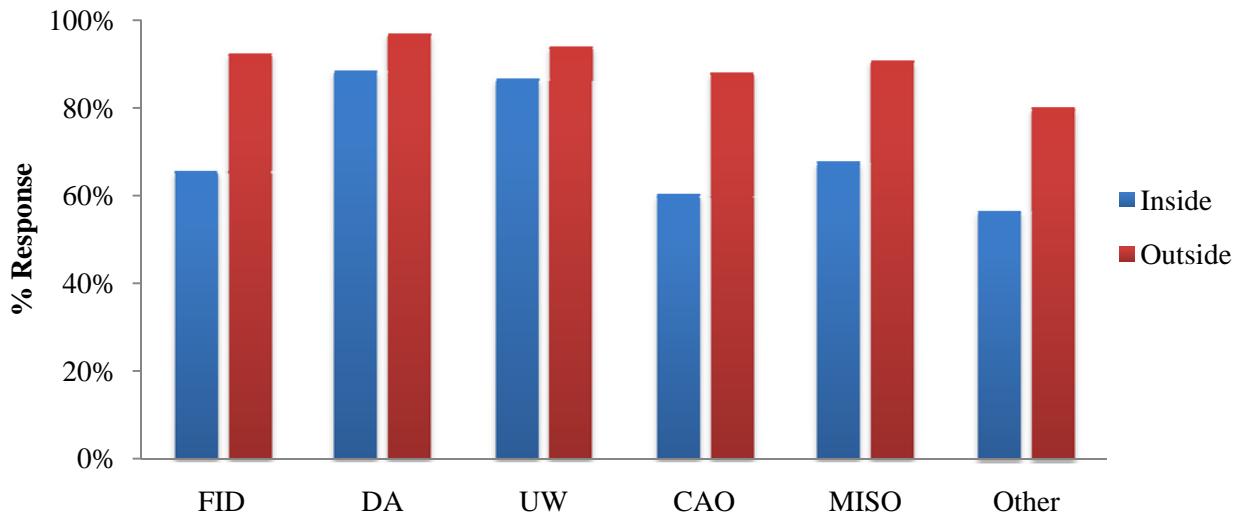
Similarly, interpreter use varies among USASOC organizations (Figure 3, p. 14). On inside AOR deployments, 3rd SFG (95%, $n = 55$) and 5th SFG (93%, $n = 126$) reported the highest percentage of interpreter use, while 7th SFG (5%, $n = 2$) and 20th SFG (6%, $n = 1$) reported the smallest percentage. The small percentage of interpreter use from 7th SFG and 20th SFG is not surprising due to their AOR being Southern Command (SOUTHCOM). The primary language of SOUTHCOM is Spanish (i.e., a CAT I language), which is easier for native English speakers to learn than other languages; therefore, these SOF operators tend to have higher proficiency levels.

On outside AOR deployments, 5th SFG (100%, $n = 7$) and SWCS staff (100%, $n = 12$) reported the highest percentage of interpreter use, while 20th SFG (60%, $n = 6$) reported the smallest percentage. Interpreter use across outside AOR deployments was high among all USASOC organizations.

Figure 3. Interpreter Use by USASOC Organization

Note. 19th SFG was excluded due to small sample size. Sample sizes are presented in Appendix C.

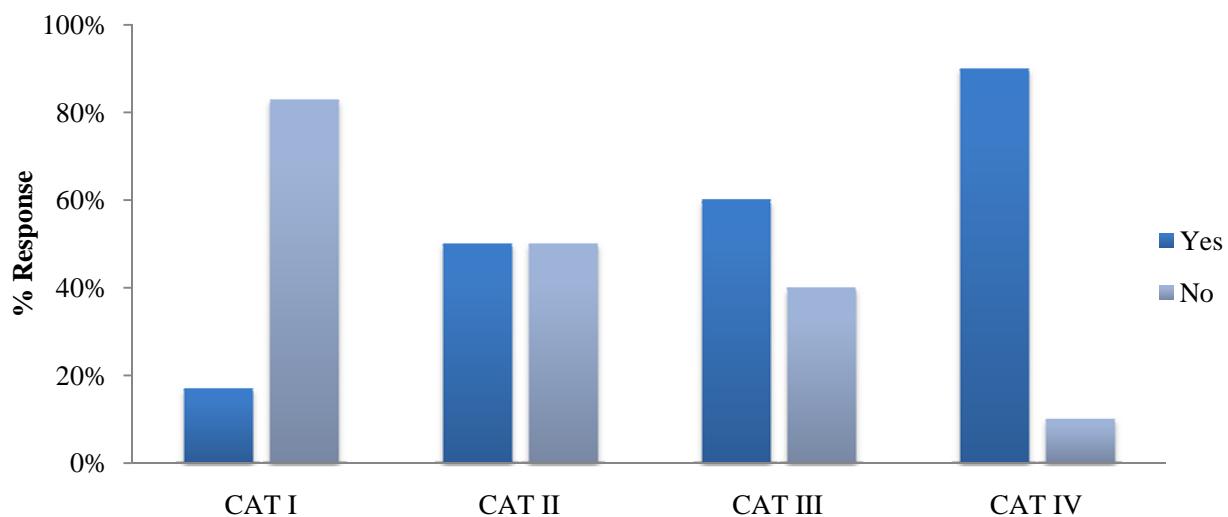
Second, interpreter use varies between SOF core tasks (Figure 4, p. 14). For inside AOR missions, SOF operators most commonly used interpreters on DA and UW SOF core tasks. On outside AOR missions, SOF operators most commonly used interpreters on DA missions; however, for any given SOF core task no fewer than 88% of SOF operators indicated using an interpreter when deployed outside their AOR.

Figure 4. Interpreter Use by SOF Core Task

Note. ‘Other’ SOF core task responses include Special Reconnaissance (SR), Counter Proliferation (CP), Information Operations (IO), Counter-Insurgency (COIN), Multiple Core Tasks, Counter Narco-Terrorism (CNT), and Counterterrorism (CT).

Third, the difficulty level of the deployment region language(s) played a role in the use of interpreters for inside AOR deployments (Figure 5, p. 15). There are four categories (CATs) created by the Department of Defense (DoD) to describe the level of difficulty native English speakers have in achieving proficiency in the target language. The categories range from CAT I languages as the least difficult to learn (e.g., Spanish) to CAT IV languages as the most difficult to learn (e.g., Modern Standard Arabic) for native English speakers. Overall, results indicated that SOF operators who were assigned to CAT IV languages (most difficult to learn) were much more likely to use interpreters than those assigned a CAT I language (least difficult to learn).

Figure 5. Interpreter Use by Language Difficulty Categories for Inside AOR Deployments



Note. Only those recently deployed inside their AOR were examined, as SOF operators deployed outside their AOR were not asked to indicate if they had language proficiency in their deployed region.

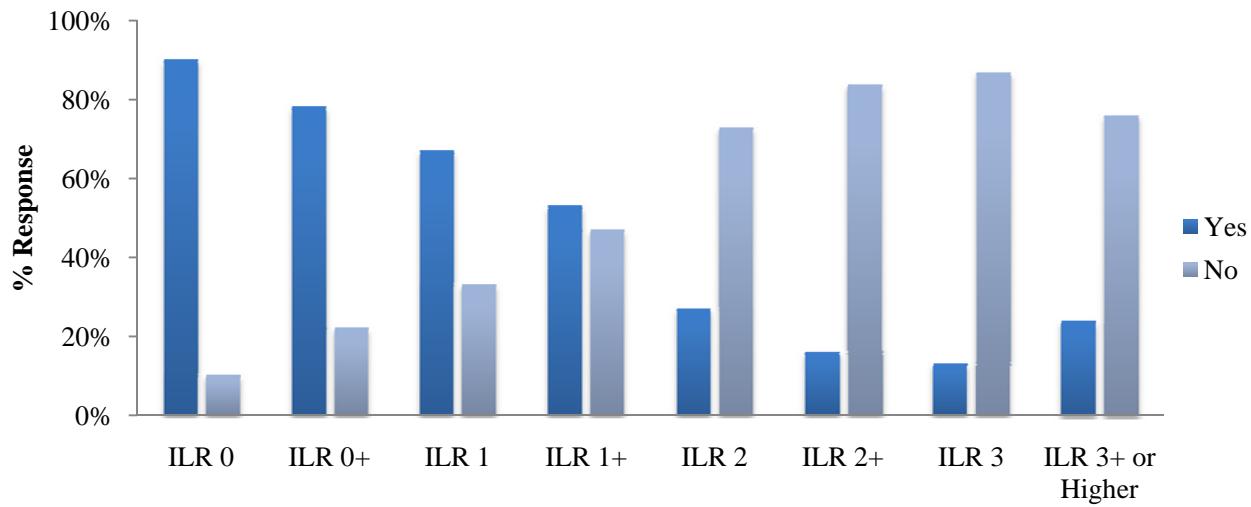
Fourth, SOF operator language proficiency played a role in the use of interpreters (Figures 6 and 7 on p. 16). SOF operators provided self-ratings of their listening, speaking, and reading proficiency in the target language. Percentages of SOF operators who used interpreters (or whose team used interpreters) on their most recent inside AOR mission at each level of language proficiency are presented in Figure 6 (listening proficiency) and Figure 7 (speaking proficiency).⁶ There was a clear trend indicating SOF operators with lower proficiency were more likely to use interpreters than those with higher proficiency. The decrease in interpreter use was gradual over the range of language proficiency. SOF operators who did not use an interpreter began to outnumber those who did at ILR 2 proficiency or higher (listening and speaking).

The relationship between a SOF operator's self-rated listening and speaking proficiencies and the likelihood that he (or his team) used interpreters also differed depending on how proficient the SOF operator was relative to others on his team. The decreases in interpreter usage as proficiency increased pictured in Figures 6 and 7 (p. 16) were more pronounced if the SOF operator had less proficiency compared to others on his team. On the other hand, these decreases in interpreter usage were less pronounced if the SOF operator was one of the more proficient SOF operators on the team (Figure 8, p.

⁶ Results for reading proficiency were similar, but are not presented.

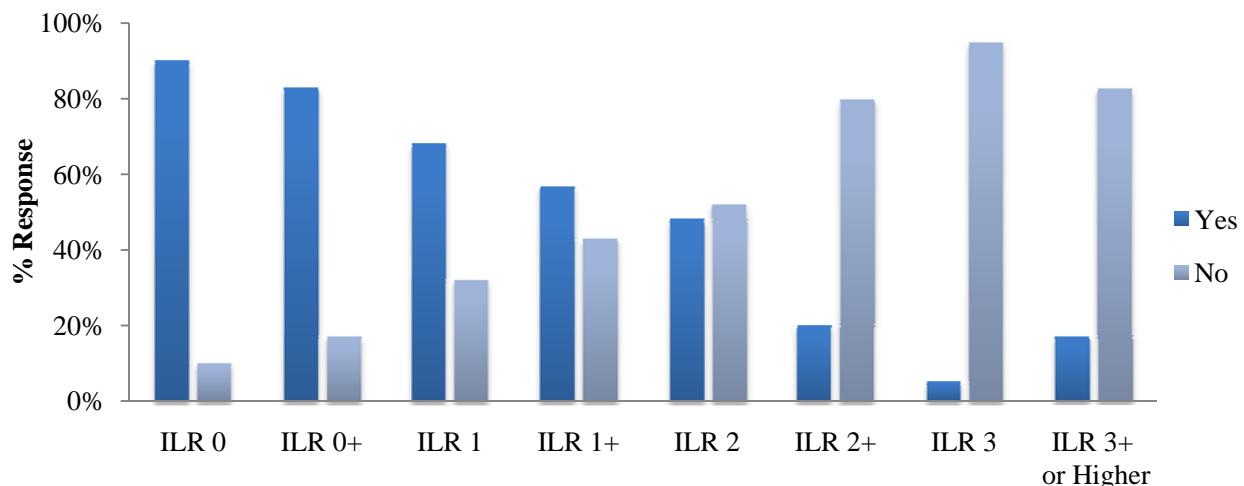
17). This finding highlights the fact that the likelihood that a SOF operator will use interpreters depends not only on that individual's language capability but also the language capability of his fellow SOF operators. The level of language proficiency of the *least* proficient team members of a SOF team is a better indicator of whether or not that team will require interpreters than the proficiency level of the *most* proficient team members.

Figure 6. Interpreter Use by Self-rated Listening Proficiency in the Target Language for Inside AOR deployments



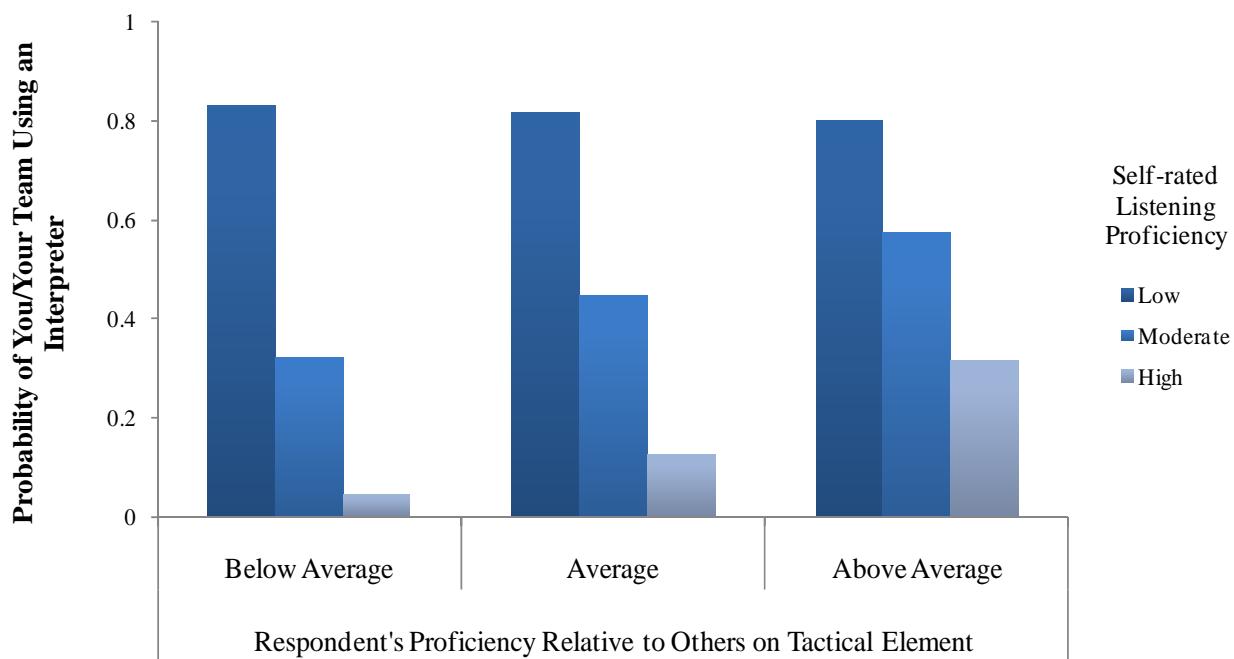
Note. Only those recently deployed inside their AOR were examined, as SOF operators deployed outside their AOR were not asked to indicate if they had proficiency in their deployed region.

Figure 7. Interpreter Use by Self-rated Speaking Proficiency in the Target Language for Inside AOR deployments



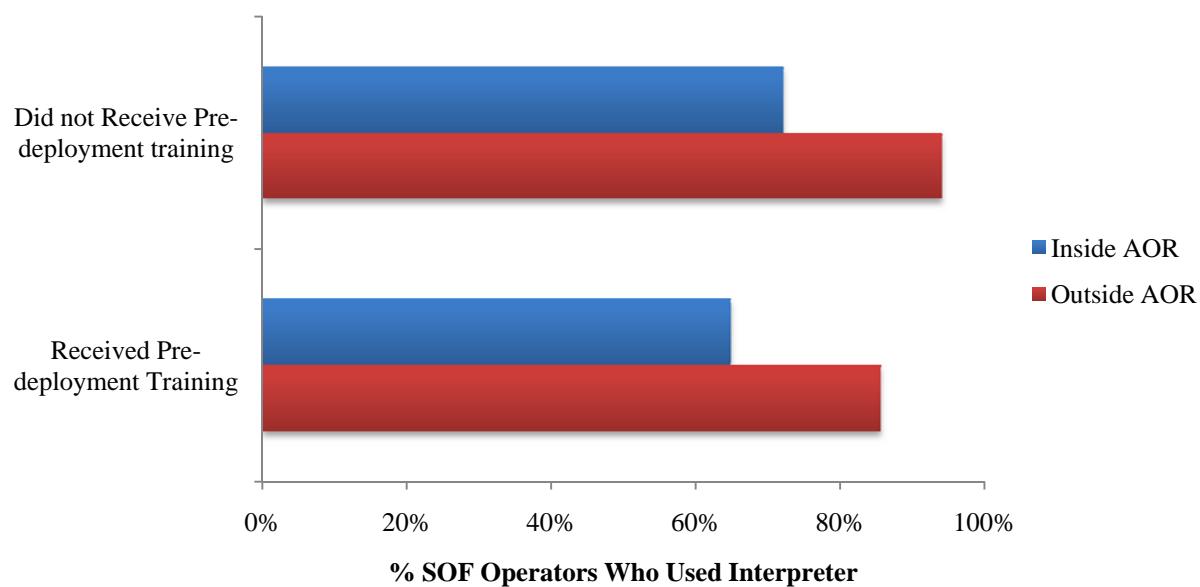
Note. Only those recently deployed inside their AOR were examined, as SOF operators deployed outside their AOR were not asked to indicate if they had proficiency in their deployed region.

Figure 8. Probability of interpreter use of SOF operator self ratings of proficiency compared to the perceived proficiency of the team



Fifth, SOF operators who received pre-deployment language training were less likely to use interpreters than those who did not receive training (Figure 9, p. 17). This difference was statistically significant for both inside and outside AOR deployments.

Figure 9. Interpreter Use by Receipt of Pre-deployment Language Training

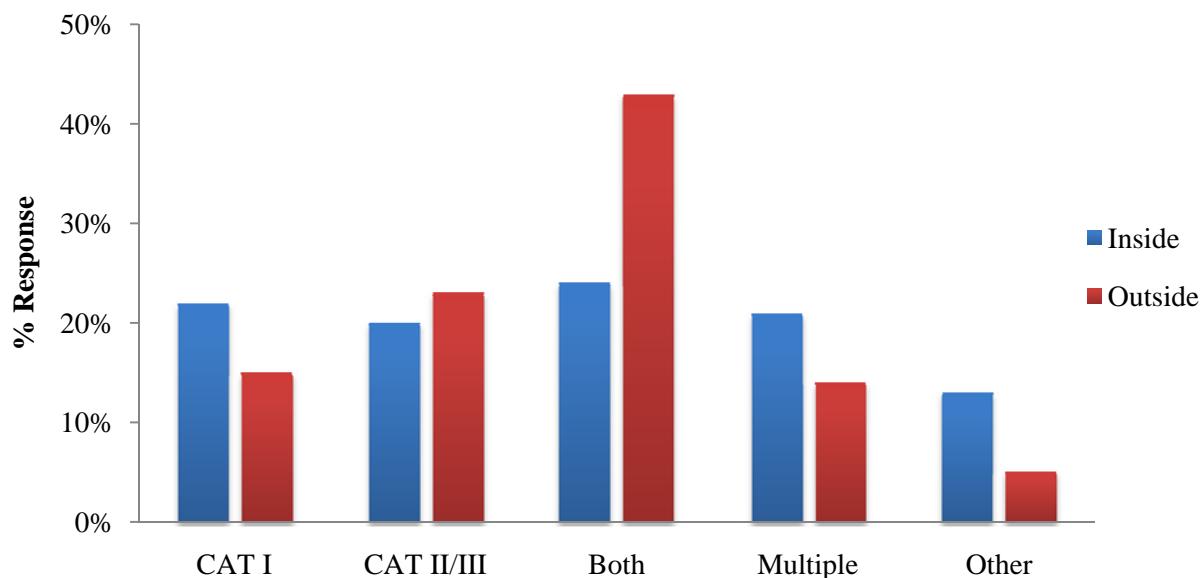


Types of Interpreters Used

On missions, there are several different types of interpreters available. Category I (CAT I) interpreters are not vetted (i.e., do not have security clearance), but have native language capability. This type of interpreter can be hired locally in the deployment country or can be a U.S. citizen. Category II or III (CAT II/III) interpreters have native-level speaking proficiency and are U.S. citizens with a secret or top-secret security clearance. Other types of interpreters can be used as well, including the U.S. Army 09L Soldiers. These interpreters (09L) are specific to the Army and specialize in Middle-Eastern languages.⁷

For recent inside and outside AOR deployments, SOF operators most frequently reported that both CAT I and CAT II/III interpreters were used (Figure 10, p. 18). SOF operators on recent outside AOR deployments, however, were much more likely (43%) than those recently deployed inside their AOR (24%) to indicate both types of interpreters were used.

Figure 10. Frequency Use of Different Interpreter Types



Note. Both = Used both CAT I and CAT II/III interpreters, Multiple = Used an “other” type and either a CAT I or CAT II/III interpreter, “Other” = 09Ls and when SOF operators indicated an “other” type of interpreter without specifying a type. Inside AOR deployment $n = 469$. Outside AOR deployment $n = 434$.

When looking at interpreter types used for different SOF core tasks, there were similar trends in terms of interpreter use on missions for both recent inside and outside AOR deployments (Tables 1 and 2 on p. 19). Specifically, SOF operators who deployed on FID, DA, or UW missions most frequently indicated using both CAT I and CAT II/III interpreters. SOF operators conducting CAO missions most frequently indicated using CAT I interpreters, while those conducting MISO missions most frequently used CAII/II interpreters.

⁷ Because 09L use on mission is infrequent and covered in-depth in another LCNA *Tier I* report (*09L Use in the SOF Community*, Technical Report #2010011014), this type is included in the “other” interpreter type category for this report.

Table 1. Inside AOR Interpreter Type by SOF Core Task

	FID	DA	UW	CAO	MISO	Other
CAT I	24%	13%	21%	38%	15%	13%
CAT II/III	13%	23%	17%	18%	38%	28%
BOTH ¹	26%	29%	30%	14%	20%	17%
Multiple ²	23%	24%	27%	11%	12%	26%
Other ³	14%	11%	4%	20%	14%	17%

¹Both = Use of both CAT I and CAT II/III type interpreters on mission.²Multiple = Used either CAT I or CAT II/III and an 'Other' type.³Other = 09L or specified another type of interpreter.*Table 2.* Outside AOR Interpreter Type by SOF Core Task

	FID	DA	UW	CAO	MISO	Other
CAT I	14%	11%	12%	38%	12%	5%
CAT II/III	18%	11%	22%	15%	50%	23%
BOTH ¹	54%	55%	51%	28%	23%	43%
Multiple ²	10%	19%	12%	16%	12%	20%
Other ³	5%	5%	4%	3%	2%	10%

¹Both = Use of both CAT I and CAT II/III type interpreters on mission.²Multiple = Used either CAT I or CAT II/III and an 'Other' type.³Other = 09L or specified another type of interpreter.

SECTION III: RELIANCE ON INTERPRETERS

This section reports the extent SOF operators rely on interpreters, including how frequently SOF operators (and their teams) use interpreters, and how dependent SOF operators (and their teams) were on interpreters to complete their missions.

Research Questions

This section addresses the following questions:

- How often did SOF operators and teams use interpreters on their most recent mission?
- How dependent were SOF operators and teams on interpreters for mission success?

Main Findings

Most SOF operators reported using interpreters on missions *every day*. This was true with regard to both personal use of interpreters and use of interpreters by the team. The frequency of interpreter use varied, however, depending on the following:

- SOF core task
- Language-related tasks needed for mission success
- Self-rated speaking and listening proficiency
- Receipt of pre-deployment language training

Across SOF core tasks, interpreters were used frequently, ranging from *2-3 times a week* to *every day*. However, there was some variation in interpreter use between SOF core tasks. MISO missions had the least frequent interpreter use on both inside and outside AOR deployments, while DA, FID, and UW missions had the highest interpreter use. The varying reliance on interpreters for these mission tasks could be related to the specific types of language-related tasks required on the missions. Therefore, the types of language-related tasks required on missions were examined to explore differences in personal and team interpreter use. Overall, interpreters were most commonly used to give commands, control hostile situations, persuade people to provide information, and use military or technical vocabulary to train others.

With interpreter use being greatest for tasks requiring speaking and participatory listening, the extent to which personal proficiency in the language(s) of the deployment region impacted interpreter use was examined. As expected, SOF operators who reported higher levels of speaking and listening proficiency in the deployment language used interpreters less than SOF operators with lower proficiency. Further, SOF operators who received language training prior to deployment for outside AOR deployments used interpreters less than those who did not receive training, suggesting the usefulness of pre-deployment language training.

Most SOF operators reported they are *very dependent* on interpreters both inside and outside their AOR. This high level of dependence is consistent with the high frequency of interpreter use. This dependence on interpreters differed among SOF core tasks, specific mission language requirements, and self-rated

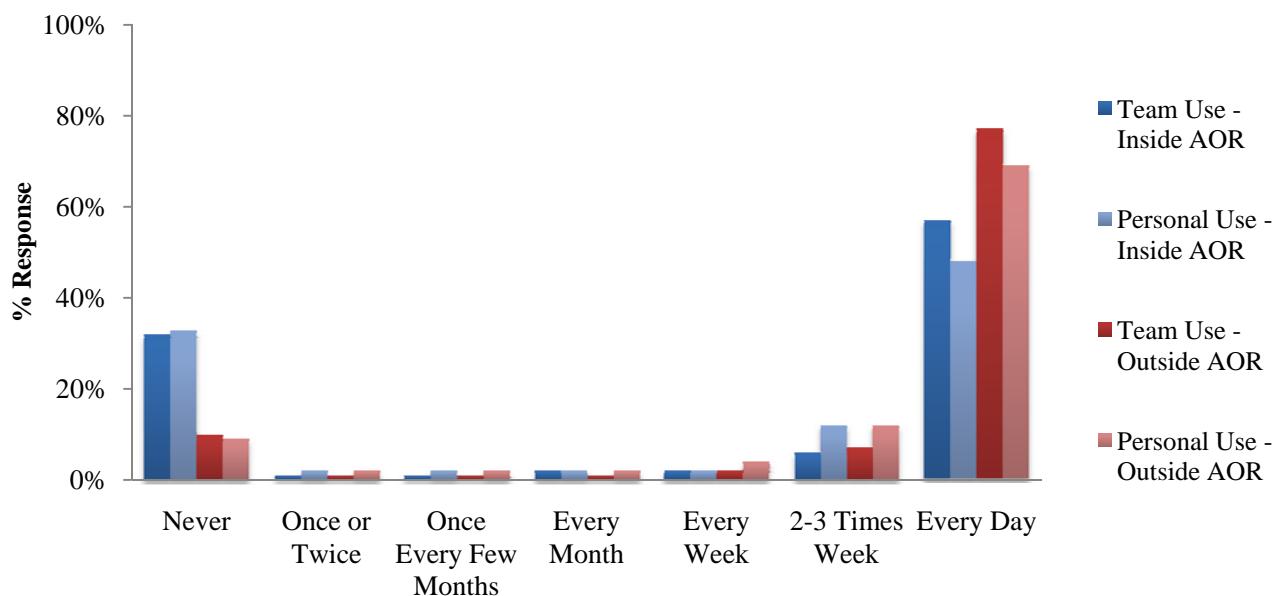
proficiency levels. In general, personal interpreter dependence was highest for SOF operators on outside AOR missions, for missions requiring SOF operators to perform speaking tasks, and for SOF operators with lower proficiency.

Detailed Findings

Frequency of Interpreter Use

SOF operators recently deployed inside or outside their AOR were asked how frequently they and their team use interpreters on missions. Overall, most SOF operators reported that interpreters were used *every day* when deployed inside or outside their AOR (Figure 11, p. 21). While SOF operators deployed outside their AOR reported a higher frequency of interpreter use than those deployed inside their AOR, both SOF operators on inside and outside AOR missions indicated higher frequency interpreter use by the team than by themselves.

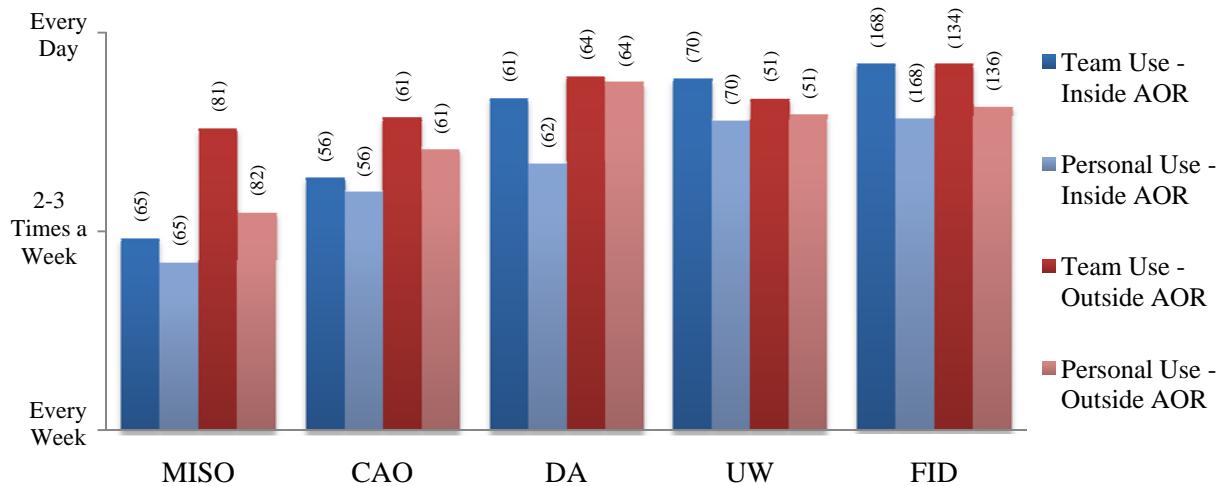
Figure 11. Frequency of Interpreter Use on Missions



Note. Respondents who indicated they (or their team) did not use an interpreter were included in the “Never” category in this figure. Means, sample sizes, and frequencies are presented in Appendix D.

Of those that indicated interpreter use, the frequency of use was fairly consistent across SOF mission tasks, with the average use of interpreters between *2-3 times a week* and *every day* for both those deployed inside or outside their AOR (Figure 12, p. 22). However, there were some differences between inside and outside AOR use of interpreters on MISO missions, with the general trend of team interpreter use on inside AOR deployments less frequent than team interpreter use on outside AOR deployments.

This finding suggests that the language tasks performed on MISO missions may be more readily accomplished with the language skills that are organic to SOF teams.

Figure 12. Average Frequency of Use by SOF Core Task

Note. This figure presents the mean interpreter use frequencies for SOF core tasks with samples larger than 10. Sample sizes for each mean is presented in parentheses. The frequency scale included the following items: *Never, Once or twice, Once every few months, Every month, Every week, 2-3 times a week, Every day.*

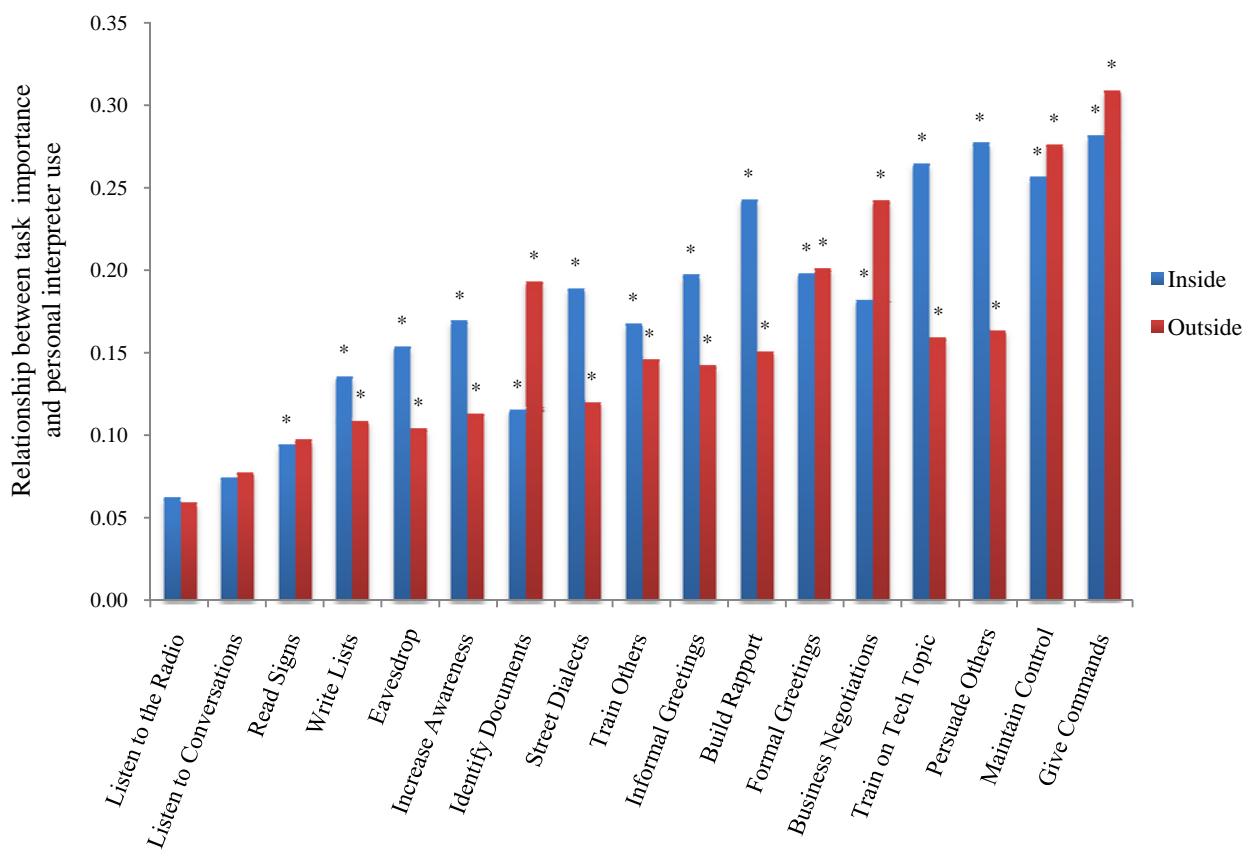
Next, the survey examined how interpreter use relates to the types of language tasks commonly required to complete SOF missions. There were 17 different tasks ranging from conducting business negotiations with officials to using the language to increase situational awareness (Table 3, p. 22).

Table 3. Language-Related Mission Tasks

Tasks	Figure Abbreviations
• Conduct business negotiations with officials	Business Negotiations
• Read in the language to identify important documents	Identify Documents
• Make initial FORMAL greetings when introduced to individuals	Formal Greetings
• Make initial INFORMAL greetings when introduced to individuals	Informal Greetings
• Use street dialect (e.g., blue-collar/slang) in this language	Street Dialect
• Give commands (e.g., “Get down!”) in this language	Give Commands
• Use your language skills to build rapport with local militia leaders, soldiers, and/or indigenous personnel	Build Rapport
• Use military-technical vocabulary to train local civilians or military personnel on military or technical topics	Train on Tech Topic
• Read signs, graffiti, and maps in this language	Read signs
• Write lists of supplies for a local guide to purchase	Write lists
• Listen to and understand conversations at a local café in this language	Listen to Conversations
• Listen to and understand local radio broadcasts in this language	Listen to the Radio
• Train or teach others in this language	Train Others
• Use this language for discrete eavesdropping	Eavesdrop
• Use this language for increasing situational awareness	Increase Awareness
• Use this language for maintaining control in hostile situations	Maintain Control
• Use this language for persuading people to provide sensitive information	Persuade Others

Of those SOF operators who indicated interpreter use, the frequency of interpreter use was related to the importance of language-related tasks to mission success. Figure 13 (p. 23) shows respondents personally used interpreters frequently during their most recent missions where it was important to give commands and maintain control in hostile situations using the target language. This was true for deployments both inside and outside of the respondent's AOR. SOF operators also frequently used interpreters on missions requiring SOF operators to persuade others to provide information using the target language and use military-technical vocabulary when training their host nation counterparts, particularly for inside AOR deployments. Interpreter use was less frequent on missions requiring SOF operators to passively listen to speech, read signs, and write in the target language.

Figure 13. Relationship between the Importance of Language-related Tasks to Mission Success and Personal Interpreter Use

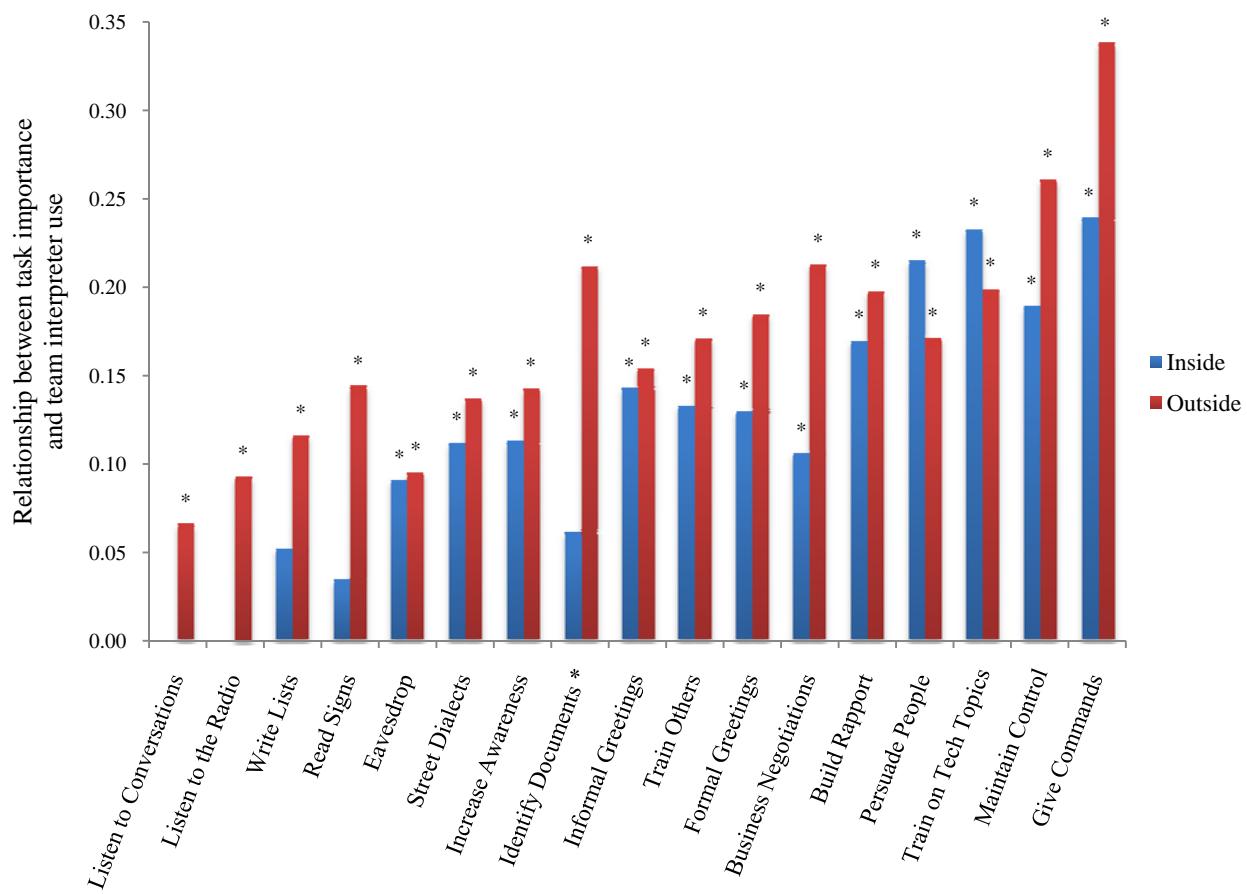


Note. Values plotted in the figure are correlations. Bars with an asterisk (*) indicate the correlations were statistically significant ($p < .05$). All correlations were positive, indicating interpreters were used more frequently as the importance of each task to the mission increased. Differences between inside and outside correlations were not statistically significant. All correlation values are presented in Appendix D.

Figure 14 (p. 24) shows the relationship between the frequency of interpreter use for a respondent's team and the importance of language-related mission tasks. Respondents indicated their teams used interpreters frequently during their most recent missions where it was important to give commands and maintain control in hostile situations using the target language. This was particularly true for deployments outside of the SOF operator's AOR. Interpreters were also used frequently on missions

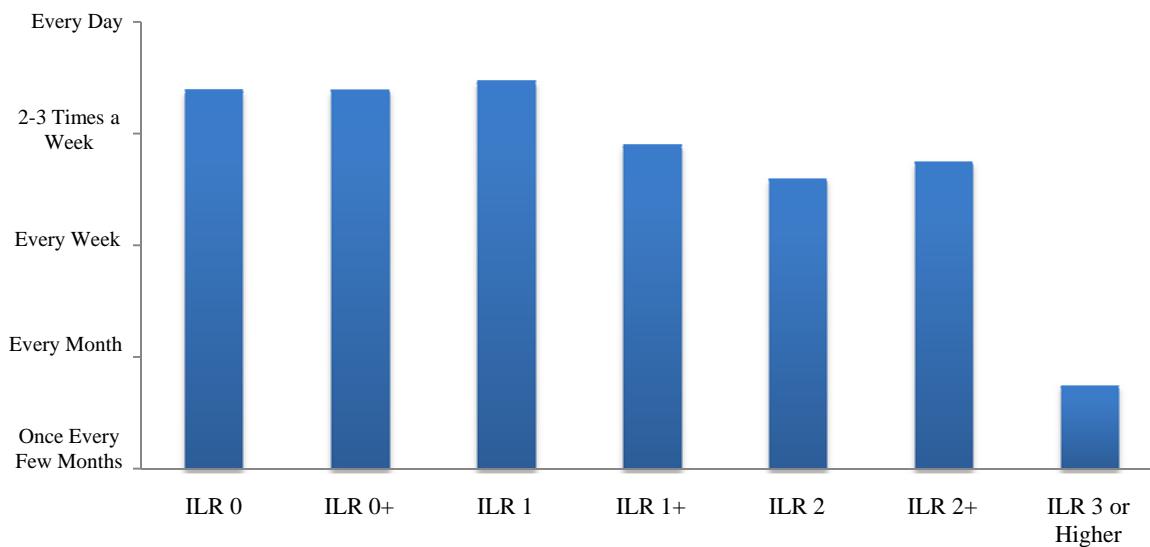
requiring SOF operators to build rapport with the local population, persuade others to provide information using the target language, and use military-technical vocabulary.

Figure 14. Relationship between the Importance of Language-related Tasks to Mission Success and Team Interpreter Use

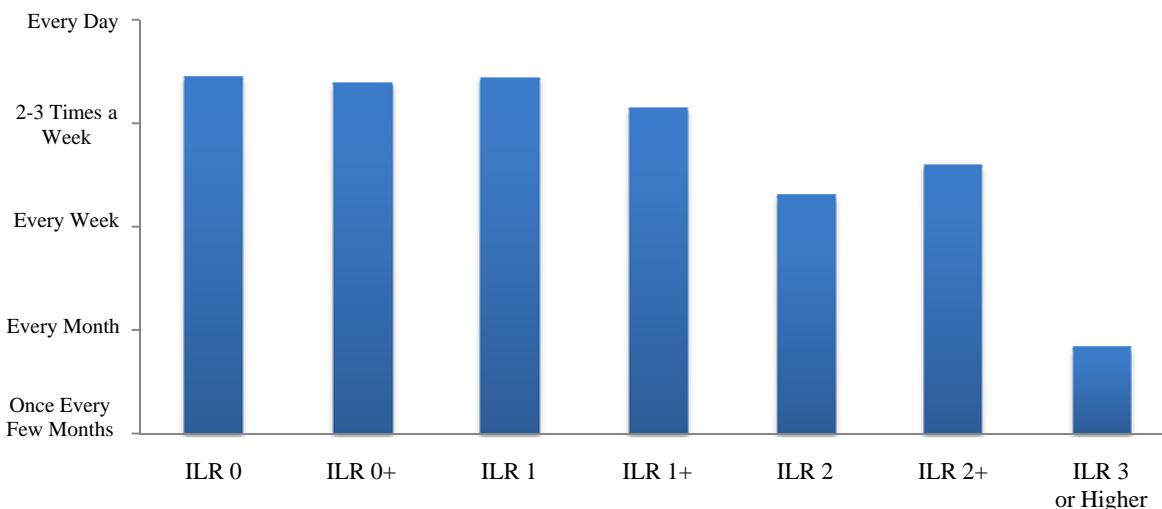


Note. Values plotted in the figure are positive correlations. Negative correlations were not plotted in this figure (see Appendix D for all correlation values). Bars with an asterisk (*) indicate the correlations were statistically significant ($p < .05$). The asterisk (*) after the task ‘Identify Documents’ indicates significant differences between inside and outside correlations. No other significant differences were found between inside and outside task correlations.

SOF operators with lower self-rated proficiency (listening or speaking) reported more frequent personal use of interpreters than those with higher proficiency (Figures 15 and 16 on p. 25). Decreases in interpreter use were gradual across ILR levels.

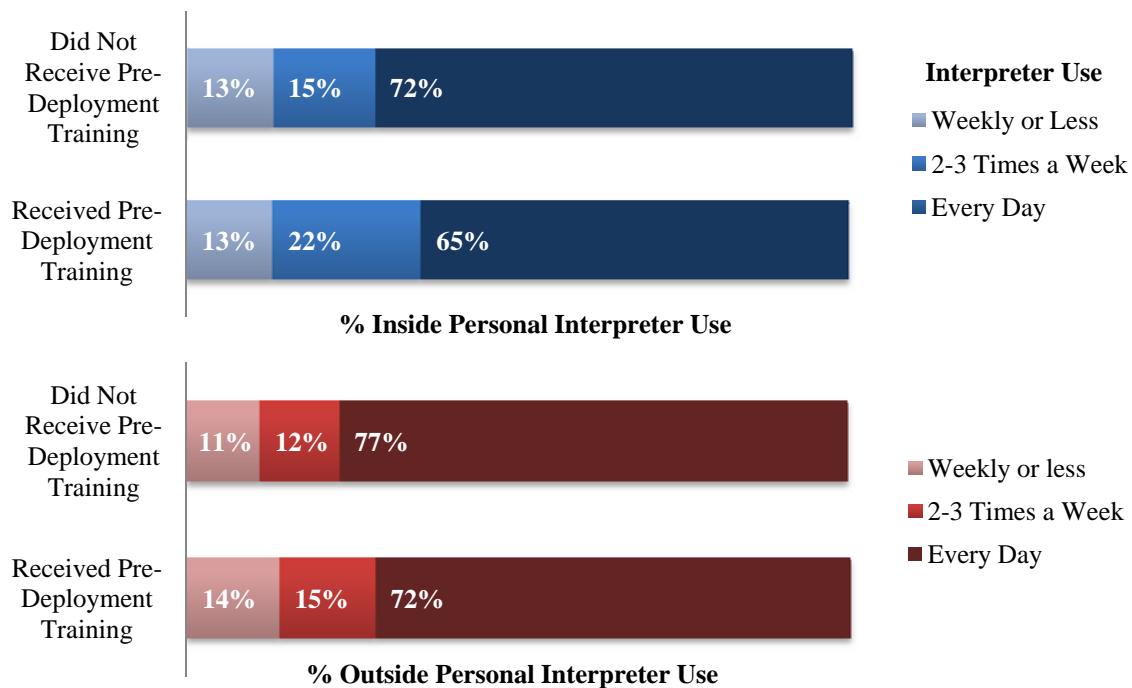
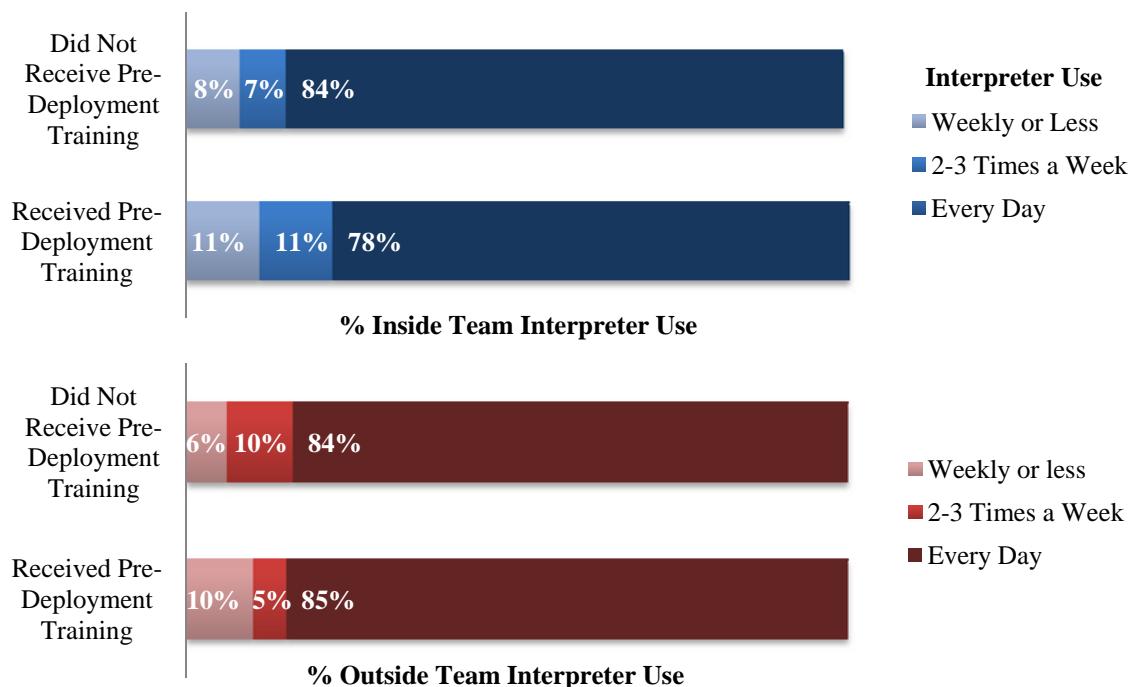
Figure 15. Frequency of Personal Interpreter Use by Self-rated Listening Proficiency

Note. This figure presents the mean frequency for each ILR level of proficiency.

Figure 16. Frequency of Personal Interpreter Use by Self-rated Speaking Proficiency

Note. This figure presents the mean frequency for each category. Frequency of interpreter use items included: *Never, Once or twice, Once every few months, Every month, Every week, 2-3 times a week, Every day*.

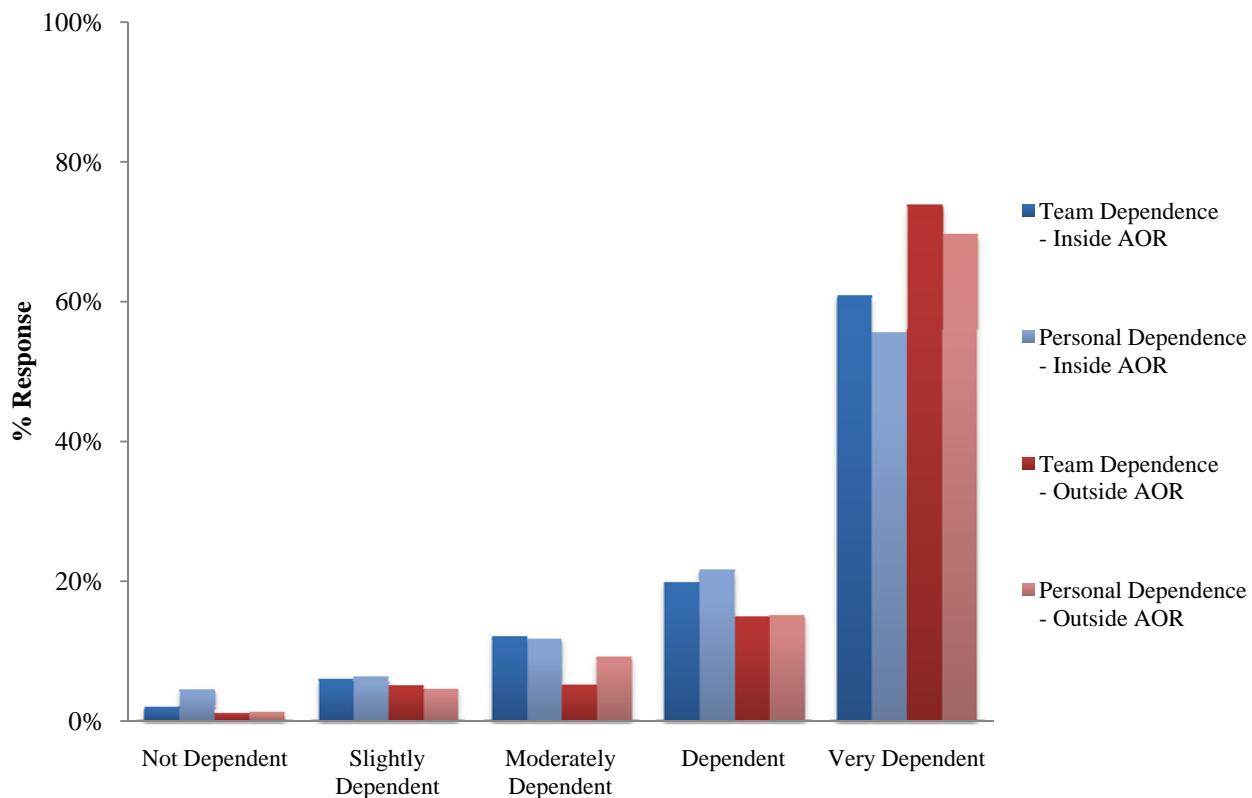
The receipt of language training prior to deployment also had an impact on interpreter use inside the AOR (Figure 17, p. 26). SOF operators reported less frequent interpreter use when they received pre-deployment language training. Receipt of pre-deployment language training did not impact the use of interpreters on outside AOR deployments (Figure 18, p. 26).

Figure 17. Receipt of Pre-deployment Language Training and Frequency of Personal Interpreter Use*Figure 18. Receipt of Pre-deployment Language Training and Frequency of Team Interpreter Use*

Dependence on Interpreters

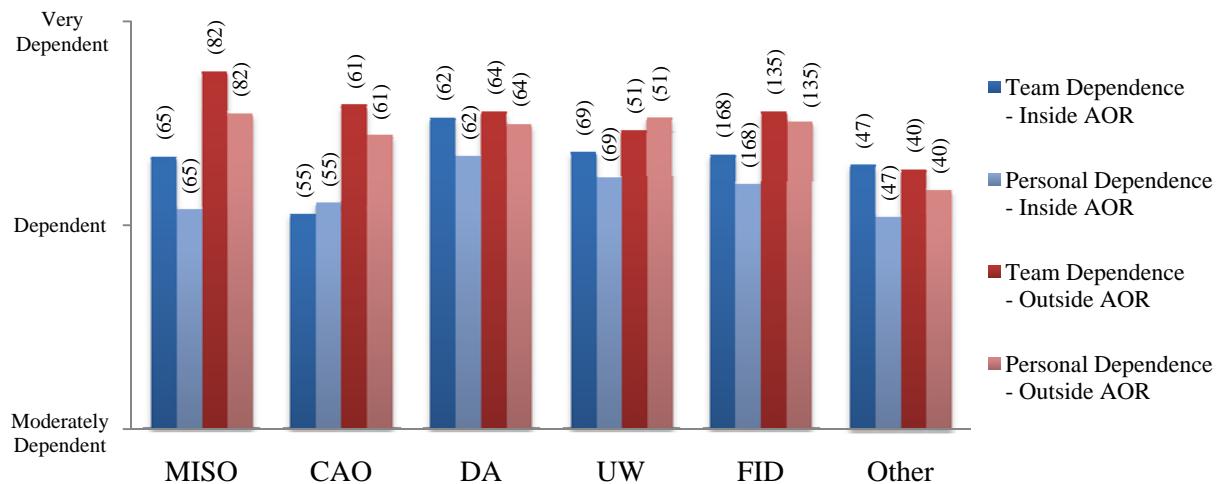
Consistent with the high frequency interpreter use, most SOF operators report they are *very dependent* on interpreters both when deployed inside and outside their AOR (Figure 19, p. 27). To further examine dependence on interpreters, the results were examined also by SOF core task, importance of language-related tasks to mission success, self-rated proficiency, and receipt of pre-deployment training.

Figure 19. Personal and Team Dependence on Interpreters



Note. Sample sizes are presented in Appendix D.

Across mission tasks the dependence on interpreters was higher for those deployed outside their AOR than inside their AOR (Figure 20, p. 28). However, all mission tasks for both inside and outside AOR deployments had average dependence ratings falling between *dependent* and *very dependent*. MISO missions had the highest team dependence on interpreters on outside AOR deployments. For SOF operators deployed inside their AOR, dependence was similarly ranked across missions, with FID missions having the highest reported team dependence.

Figure 20. Personal and Team Dependence on Interpreters by SOF Core Task

Note. This figure presents the mean dependence of SOF core tasks. Sample sizes are presented in parentheses. While Figure 19 (p. 26) presents most SOF operators indicating they were very dependent on interpreters, those who reported less dependence pulled the mean down closer to being dependent on interpreters.

For SOF operators who reported being recently deployed outside their AOR, dependence on interpreters for mission success was related to the importance of all language tasks. As SOF operators usually have very little language ability outside of their AOR, dependence on interpreters for every task is understandable. SOF operators who reported deployment inside their AOR, however, indicated that the dependence on interpreters was related to the importance of eight language tasks (Table 4, p. 28). The relationship between task importance on SOF operators' most recent missions and interpreter dependence was stronger for some tasks than others for those deployed inside and outside their AOR. Overall, SOF operators were more dependent on interpreters during missions where it was important to give commands (e.g., "Get Down"), persuade people, maintain control in hostile situations and train others using military-technical vocabulary using in the target language (see Appendix D for correlation values).

Table 4. Summary of the Significant Relationships between Personal Dependence on Interpreters and Language-related Task Importance

Inside AOR	Outside AOR
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give commands • Persuade people • Use military-technological vocabulary to teach others • Control hostile situations • Write lists • Build Rapport • Read to identify documents • Make informal greetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All tasks

Note. Importance ratings are related to SOF operators' most recent missions. Listed tasks indicate SOF operators were more dependent on interpreters for the task as the importance of the task increased. Tasks are presented for inside AOR deployments in descending order from the strongest relationship with personal dependence to the weakest relationship. Tasks not presented for inside AOR deployments were not significant. All task correlation values are presented in tables in Appendix D.

Reported task importance and team dependence on interpreters displayed similar trends to personal interpreter use. Across deployment types, SOF operators indicated their teams used interpreters frequently during missions where it was important to persuade others, train others using military-technical vocabulary, give commands, and maintain control in hostile situations using the target language (Table 5, p. 29).

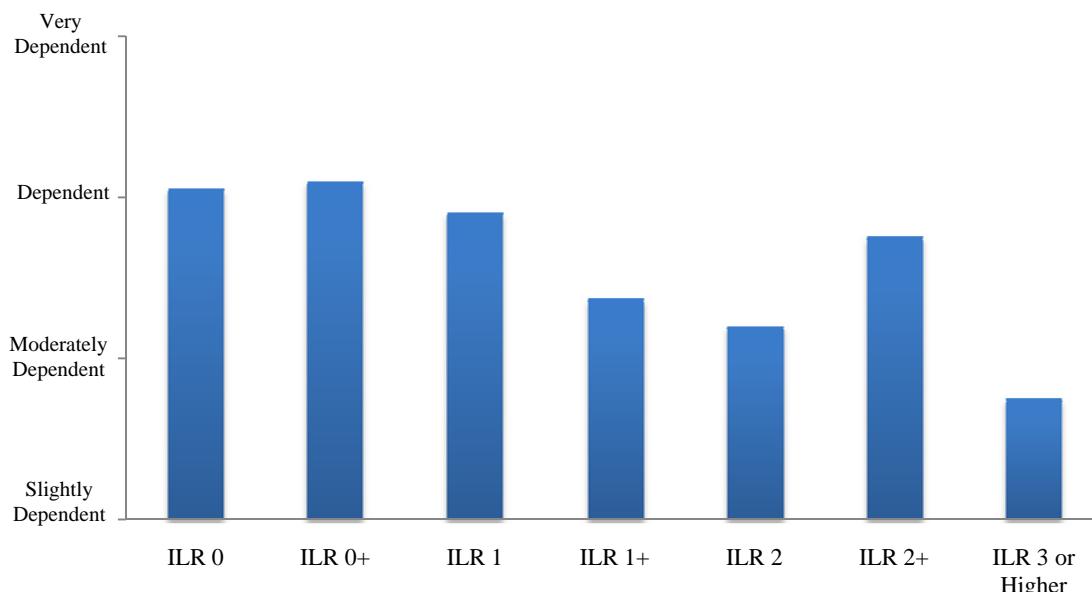
Table 5. Summary of the Significant Relationships between Team Dependence on Interpreters and Language-related Task Importance

Inside AOR	Outside AOR
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persuade people • Use military-technological vocabulary to teach others • Give commands • Control hostile situations • Read to identify documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All tasks

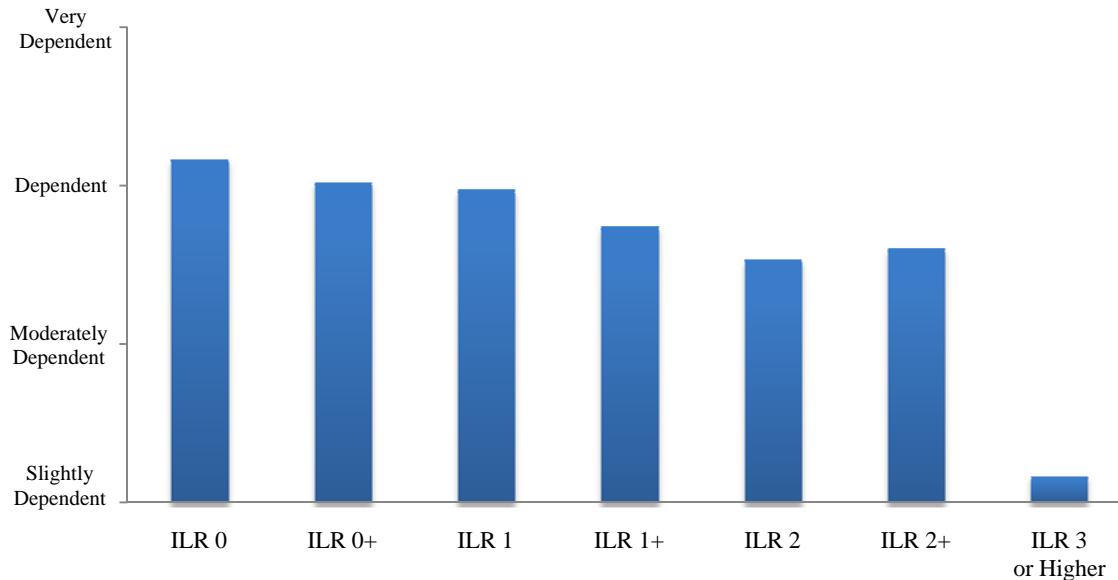
Note. Importance ratings are related to SOF operators' most recent missions. Listed tasks indicate SOF operator teams were more dependent on interpreters for the task as the importance of the task increased. Tasks are presented for inside AOR deployments in descending order from the strongest relationship with team dependence to the weakest relationship. Tasks not presented for inside AOR deployments were not significant. All task correlation values are presented in tables in Appendix D.

SOF operators with lower self-rated proficiency (listening or speaking) reported greater personal dependence on interpreters than those with higher proficiency (Figures 21 p. 29 and Figure 22 on p. 30). Decreases in dependence on interpreters were gradual between ILR 0 and ILR 2+. There was a more marked decrease in dependence for SOF operators at ILR 3 or higher proficiency compared to less proficient SOF operators.

Figure 21. Personal Dependence on Interpreters by Self-rated Listening Proficiency

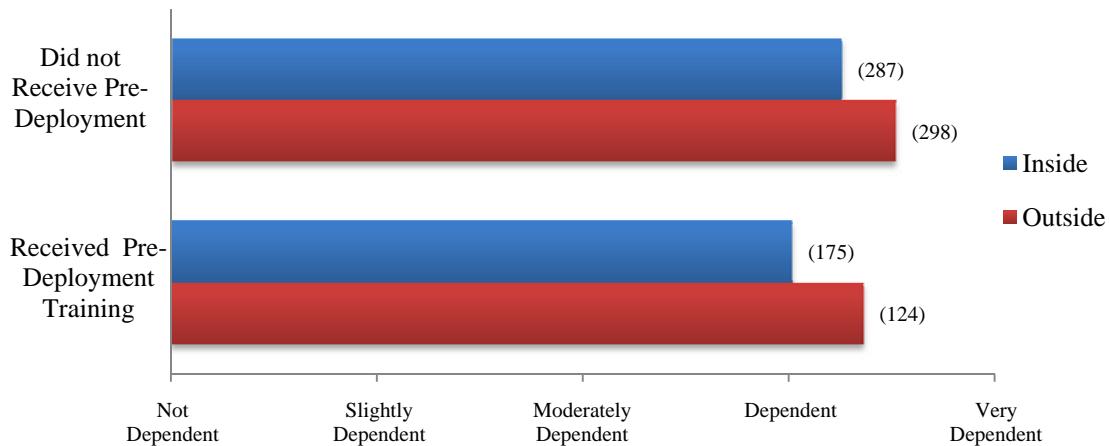


Note. This figure presents the mean dependence for each proficiency category of Inside AOR deployed SOF operators.

Figure 22. Personal Dependence on Interpreters by Self-rated Speaking Proficiency

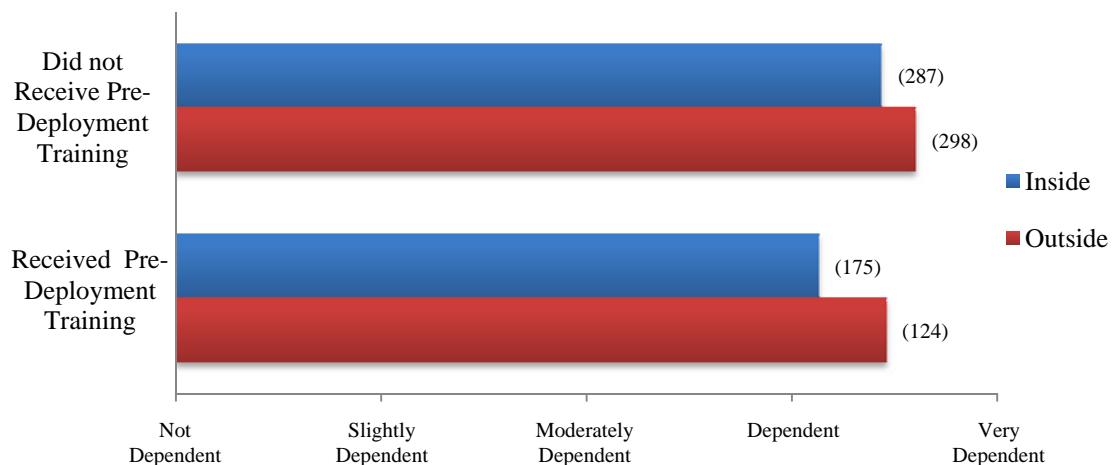
Note. This figure presents the mean dependence for each proficiency category for Inside AOR deployed SOF operators.

The receipt of pre-deployment language training was also examined for differences in interpreter dependence both personally and by the team. For both inside and outside AOR deployments, dependence on interpreters remained high for both SOF operators who received and did not receive pre-deployment language training (Figures 23, p. 30 and Figure 24, p. 31). For inside AOR deployments, SOF operators who received pre-deployment language training reported that both they personally and their team were less dependent on interpreters than those who did not receive pre-deployment language training.

Figure 23. Personal Dependence on Interpreters by Receipt of Pre-deployment Training

Note. This figure presents the mean personal dependence for those that received and did not receive pre-deployment language training. Sample sizes are presented in parentheses. For inside AOR deployments, those SOF operators who received pre-deployment language training reported that they personally were less dependent on interpreters than those who did not receive pre-deployment language training. There were no significant differences in personal dependence based on receipt of pre-deployment training for outside AOR deployments.

Figure 24. Team Dependence on Interpreters by Receipt of Pre-deployment Training



Note. This figure presents the mean team dependence for those that received and did not receive pre-deployment language training. Sample sizes are presented in parentheses. For inside AOR deployments, those SOF operators who received pre-deployment language training reported that their team was less dependent on interpreters than those who did not receive pre-deployment language training. There were no significant differences in team dependence based on receipt of pre-deployment training for outside AOR deployments.

SECTION IV: IMPORTANCE OF INTERPRETERS

This section examines the importance of interpreters to mission success in the SOF community by: (1) asking SOF operators how important interpreters were to mission success, (2) asking SOF operators to rate their likelihood of success on their mission had they not had interpreters available. The role different factors play in the importance of interpreter mission success was also examined.

Research Questions

This section addresses the following questions:

- How important were interpreters to mission success?
- How is the likelihood of mission success perceived to decrease without the use of interpreters?
- What factors play a role in the importance of interpreters in the success of missions?

Main Findings

Consistent with findings of high frequency of use of and high dependence on interpreters (Section III), SOF operators most commonly rated interpreters as *very important* for mission success when deployed inside or outside their AOR. Additionally, 68% of SOF operators who deployed outside their AOR indicated they were 0% confident that they would have been successful on the mission without an interpreter. **Forty-four percent of SOF operators who deployed inside their AOR were 0% confident that they would have succeeded in their mission without the use of an interpreter.** These findings suggest that interpreters are perceived as an essential part of SOF mission success.

The extent to which interpreters were rated important for mission success was explored by examining a number of moderators (i.e., conditions) to determine when interpreters were most important. Results indicated self -reported proficiency, receipt of pre-deployment language training, SOF core task, and language-related mission tasks resulted in differences in interpreter importance or likelihood of success without an interpreter. Specifically, the following relationships were found:

- SOF operators who reported deployment inside or outside their AOR with higher proficiency indicated higher levels of likelihood of success without interpreters.
- For inside AOR deployments, SOF operators who indicated the receipt of pre-deployment language training rated interpreters as less important to mission success than those that did not receive training. Additionally, SOF operators deploying inside their AOR who indicated the receipt of pre-deployment language training indicated a higher likelihood of success without an interpreter than those who indicated they did not receive training.
- SOF operators who reported being deployed inside their AOR and participating in a DA mission had slightly higher average ratings of interpreter importance and lower average ratings of success without interpreters compared to other inside AOR SOF core tasks.
- SOF operators who reported deployment outside their AOR and participated in a MISO mission had slightly higher average ratings of interpreter importance and lower average ratings of success without interpreters compared to other outside AOR SOF core tasks.

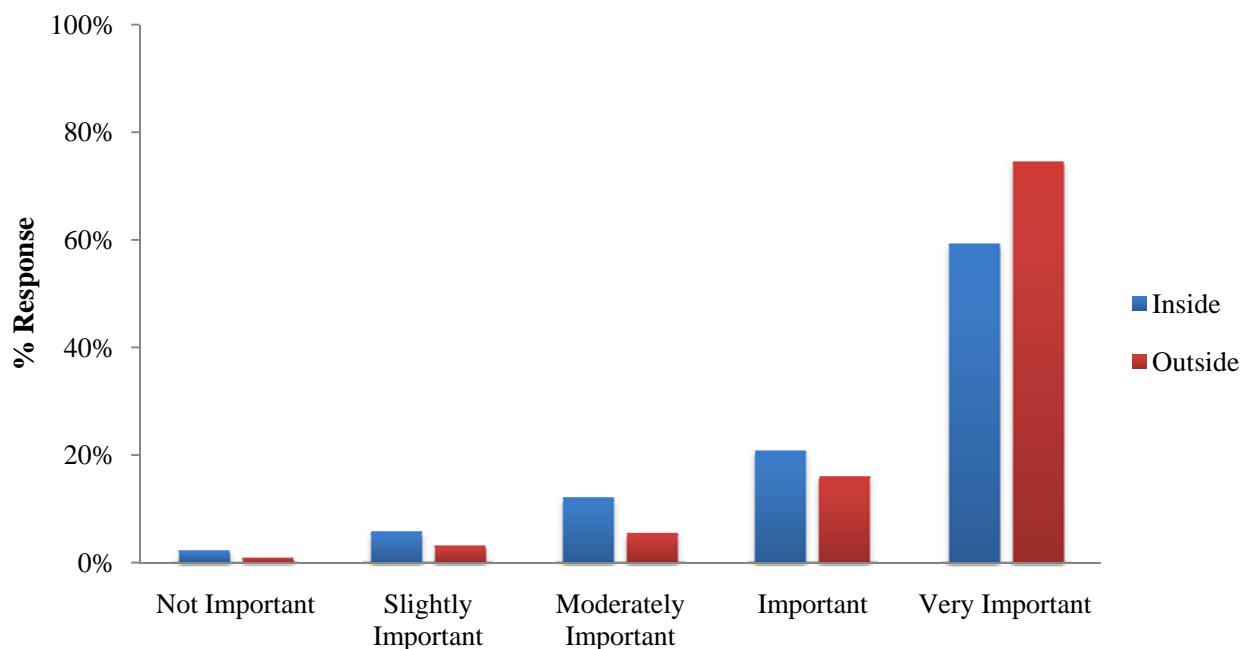
- For specific language-related mission tasks, SOF operators rated interpreters as more important outside the AOR than inside the AOR. Further, interpreters were rated most important for missions requiring controlling hostile situations, persuading people and building rapport with the host nation on both inside and outside AOR deployments.

Detailed Findings

Importance of Interpreters to Mission Success

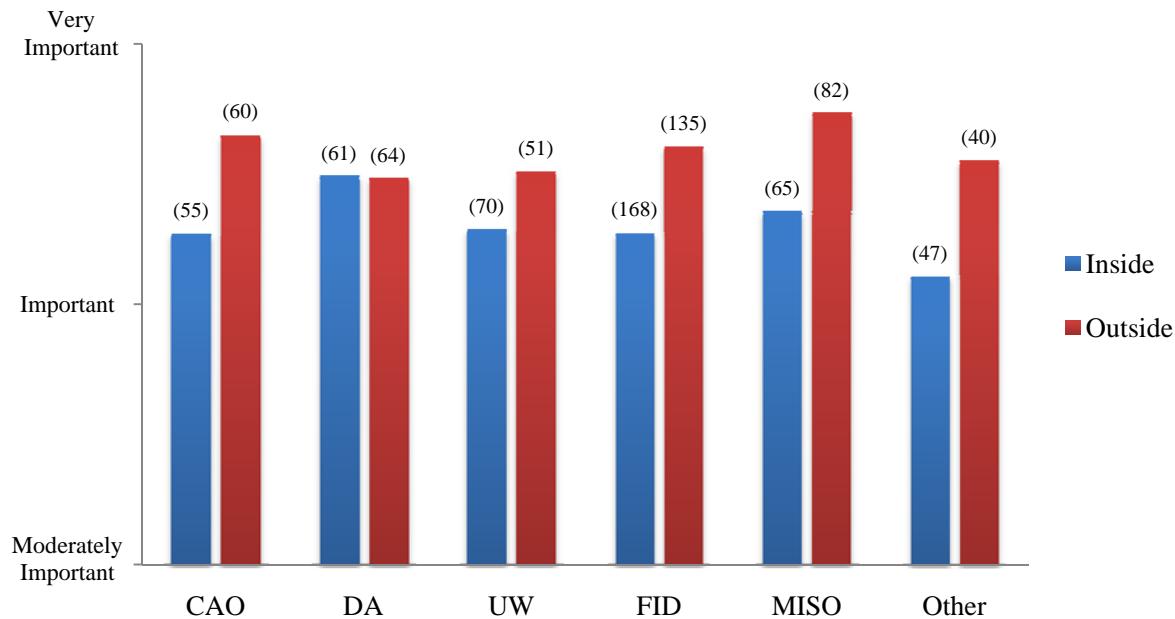
SOF operators most commonly rated interpreters as *very important* for mission success on both inside and outside AOR deployment (Figure 25, p. 33). More specifically, SOF operators rated interpreters *very important* more frequently on outside AOR missions (75%) compared to inside AOR missions (59%).

Figure 25. Importance of Interpreters to Mission Success



Note. Inside AOR deployed $n = 467$. Outside AOR deployed $n = 432$.

Mission type was found to impact SOF operator ratings of interpreter importance. Across all SOF core tasks both inside and outside the AOR, SOF operators reported interpreters were *important* to mission success (Figure 26, p. 34). With the exception of DA missions, interpreters were rated more important for mission success when deployed outside the AOR than when deployed inside the AOR. On DA missions, SOF operators rated interpreters with similar importance inside and outside the AOR.

Figure 26. Average Importance of Interpreters by SOF Core Tasks

Note. This figure presents the mean importance of each SOF core task. Sample sizes are presented in parentheses.

Next, interpreter importance was examined by the different types of language tasks commonly required to complete SOF missions. Overall, interpreters were more important for some language mission tasks than others (Table 6, p. 34). Specifically, on inside AOR deployments, SOF operators rated interpreters more important during missions where it was important to use military or technical vocabulary to teach others, persuade people, and give commands. On outside AOR deployments, SOF operators rated interpreters as important in carrying out all language-related mission tasks.

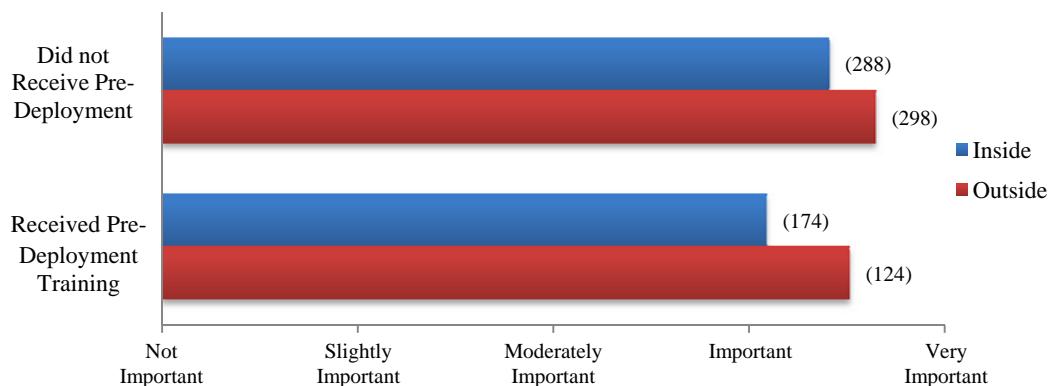
Table 6. Summary of the Language-related Mission Tasks Most Closely Associated with the Importance of Interpreters

Inside AOR	Outside AOR
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use military-technological vocabulary to teach others • Persuade people • Give commands • Read to identify documents • Read signs • Write lists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All tasks

Note. Importance ratings are related to SOF operators' most recent missions. Listed tasks indicate SOF operators had higher interpreter importance ratings as the task importance increased. Inside AOR deployment tasks are presented in descending order from the highest correlations of importance to the lowest. Inside AOR deployment tasks not presented were not significant. All task correlation values are presented in tables in Appendix E.

Regarding the role of pre-deployment language training, SOF operators deploying inside their AOR who received pre-deployment language training indicated interpreters were less important to mission success than operators who did not receive pre-deployment training (Figure 27, p. 35). For outside AOR deployments, however, SOF operators reported similar interpreter importance ratings whether or not they received language training.

Figure 27. Importance of Interpreters by Receipt of Pre-deployment Training

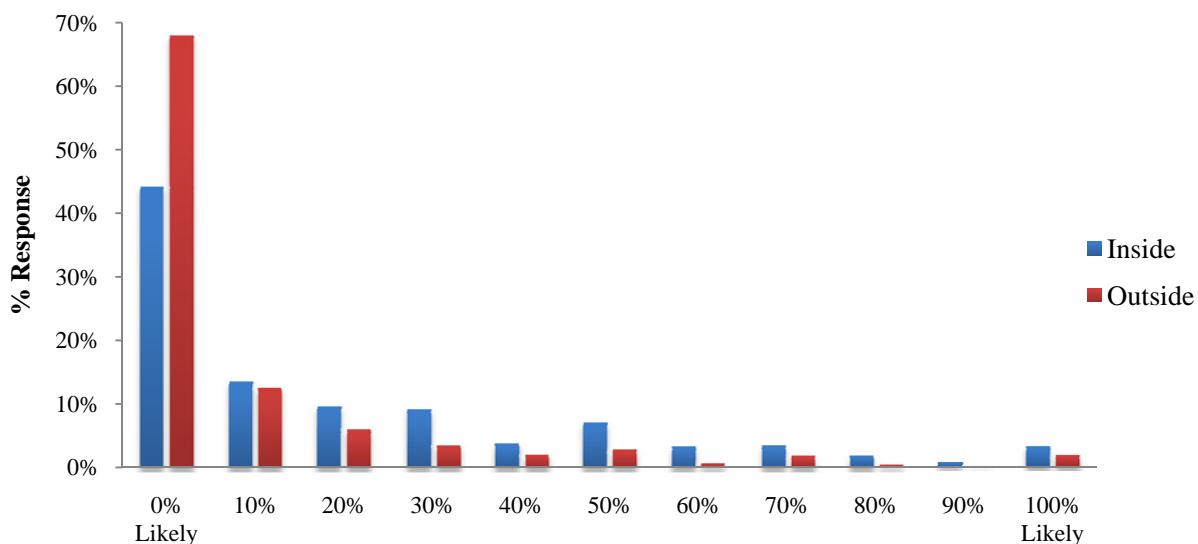


Note. This figure presents the mean importance by the receipt of pre-deployment language training. Sample sizes are presented in parentheses.

Likelihood of Mission Success without an Interpreter

Of the SOF operators who reported deployment outside their AOR, most (68%) indicated they were 0% confident that they would be successful on a mission without an interpreter (Figure 28, p. 35). SOF operators who reported deployment inside their AOR also had a **high response (44%) who indicated they were 0% confident to have mission success without the use of an interpreter**.

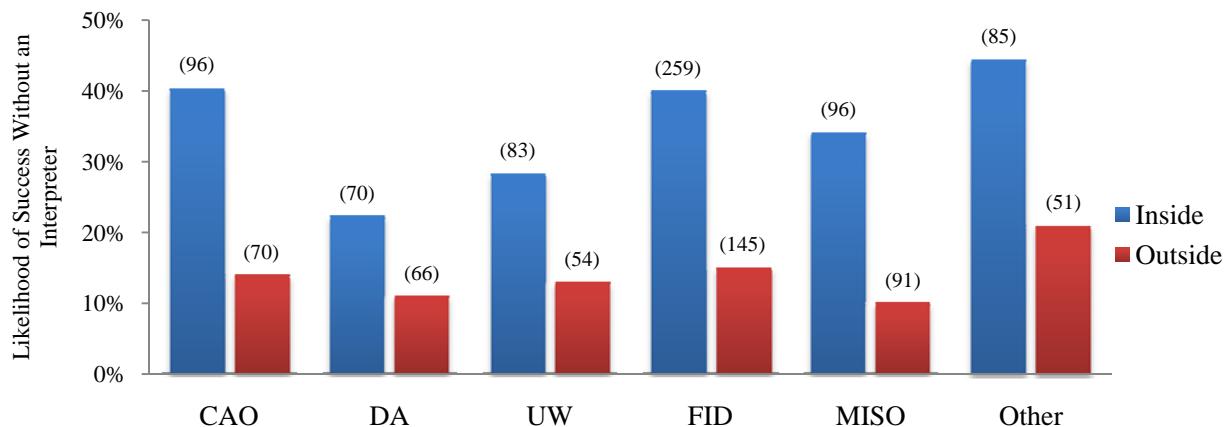
Figure 28. Likelihood of Mission Success without an Interpreter



Note. Only SOF operators who indicated the use of an interpreter on their most recent mission are included in the figure. Inside AOR deployed $n = 466$. Outside AOR deployed $n = 433$.

Across SOF core tasks, the average reported likelihood of success without an interpreter was higher for SOF operators who deployed inside their AOR than outside their AOR (Figure 29, p. 36). SOF operators who reported deployment inside their AOR, indicated the highest likelihood of success without interpreters on FID and CAO missions, and the lowest likelihood on DA missions. There were no practically meaningful differences in confidence of success without interpreters between outside AOR SOF core tasks.

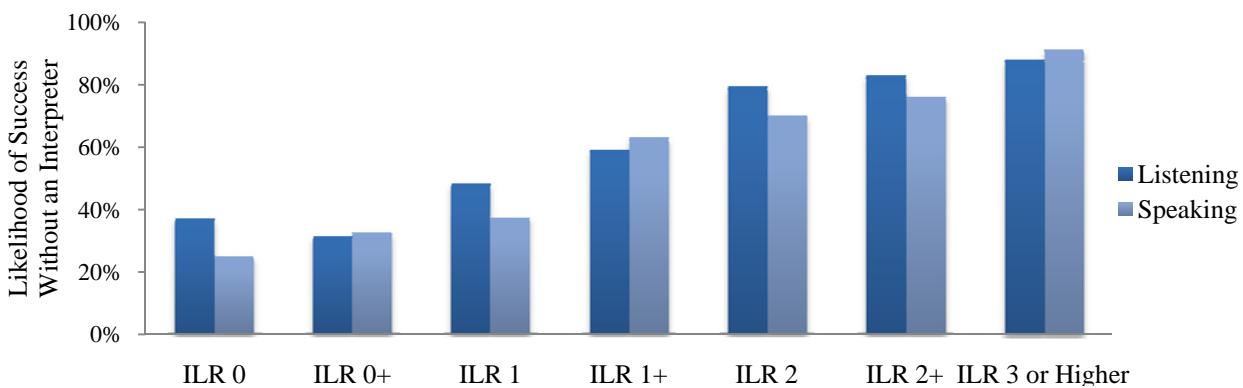
Figure 29. Average Likelihood of Success without an Interpreter by SOF Core Task



Note. This figure presents the mean likelihood that the mission would have been successful without an interpreter by SOF core task. Scale ranges from 0% likely to 100% likely there would be success without an interpreter. Sample sizes are presented in parentheses.

SOF operators with lower self-rated proficiency (listening or speaking)⁸ reported a lower likelihood of successfully completing their mission without interpreters than those with higher proficiency (Figure 30, p. 36). Increases in the likelihood of success were most pronounced from ILR 0 to ILR 2. There were more gradual increases in the likelihood of success for SOF operators at ILR 2+ or higher proficiency.

Figure 30. Average Likelihood of Success without an Interpreter by Self-reported Proficiency

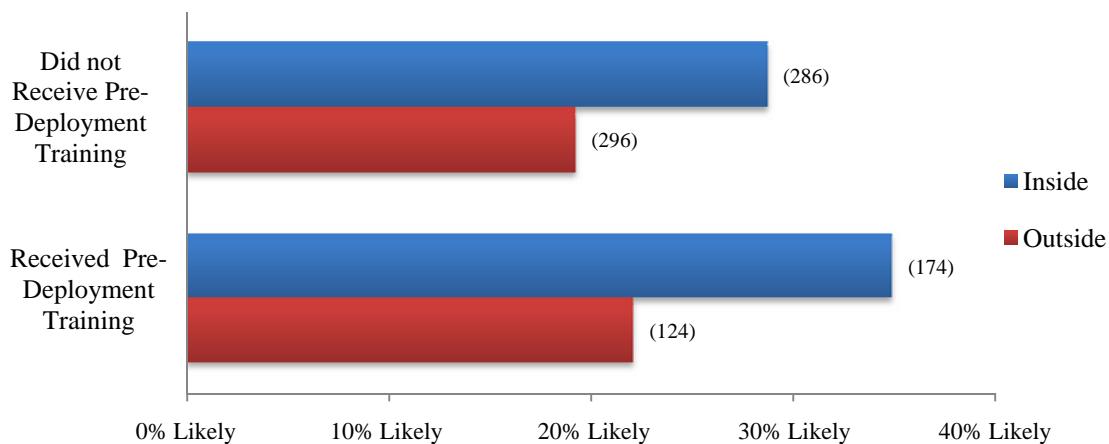


Note. This figure presents the mean likelihood that the mission would have been successful without an interpreter by respondents' self-reported listening and speaking proficiency in the deployment language. Scale ranges from 0% likely to 100% likely there would be success without an interpreter. Sample sizes are presented in parentheses.

⁸ As described in Section II, self-rated proficiency was only asked of survey respondents who indicated deployment inside their AOR.

The likelihood of mission success without interpreters was also examined by the receipt of pre-deployment training (Figure 31, p. 37). Overall, those that reported the receipt of pre-deployment training were more confident that they would have achieved mission success without an interpreter than SOF operators who reported they did not receive pre-deployment training. This difference was statistically significant on inside AOR deployments, with those who received pre-deployment training indicating a higher likelihood of mission success without an interpreter than those who did not receive pre-deployment training. Therefore, pre-deployment language training prior to inside AOR deployments can reduce SOF operators' dependence on interpreters for mission success.

Figure 31. Average Likelihood of Mission Success without Interpreters by Receipt of Pre-deployment Training



Note. This figure presents the mean likelihood that the mission would have been successful without an interpreter by the receipt of pre-deployment language training. Sample sizes are presented in parentheses. Scale ranges from 0% likely to 100% likely there would be success without an interpreter.

SECTION V: COMMENTS ON INTERPRETER USE FROM THE FIELD

While interpreter use was frequent and deemed necessary for mission success, not all interactions with interpreters were positive. This section examines SOF operator experiences with interpreters from focus group representatives from each of the components (see Appendix B – Methodology, or the *Participation Report*, Technical Report #2010011003 for more information about focus groups), including discussion from focus groups about positive and negative mission experiences with interpreters and suggestions for future interpreter use.

Research Questions

This section addresses the following questions:

- What positive experiences of interpreters did SOF operators report?
- What negative experiences of interpreters did SOF operators report?
- Do SOF operators prefer having language capability or using interpreters?
- What suggestions do SOF operators have on future interpreter use?

Main Findings

Focus group participants described both positive and negative mission experiences with interpreters. Positive comments were less frequent and included learning experiences with interpreters (e.g., learning language and culture from the interpreters), as well as gaining the ability to talk to the local populace to build rapport. Negative experiences were discussed by SOF operators more frequently. The most frequently described negative experiences included being unable to trust interpreters, interpreters not being familiar with military terminology, interpreters unwilling to do work, problems with interpreters slowing down tasks, and information being lost in translation.

In addition to discussing the number of negative experiences during the focus groups, SOF operators also described their desire for personal language capability and less reliance on interpreters.

“Ah you know, that would be great, so you didn’t have to spend so much time with an interpreter. And that you could be face-to-face with that person so that they feel your intentions”

SOF Operator, 5th SFG

SOF operators also provided two types of suggestions during focus group discussions: (1) to help facilitate more positive interpreter interactions and (2) to help decrease reliance on interpreters. To help facilitate positive interaction with interpreters, SOF operators in the focus groups suggested implementing training on how to use interpreters.⁹

“All too often you see, when people are using interpreters, they are speaking to their interpreter, not to the person that they’re actually talking to. That could be something that we’re taught in language training as well, how to use an interpreter properly.”

SOF Operator, 10th SFG

⁹ Further information about the interpreter training SOF operators currently receive is provided in the *General Use of Interpreter* report (Technical Report #2010011007).

To help decrease the reliance on interpreters, focus group members suggested that there should be more focus on personal language capability or language training.¹⁰

“Where I was at, my team of four had its own CAT II US national interpreter, who made twice as much money as I do as a captain... Whereas, if we spent the money and maybe taught me to speak a little more proficient—I mean, start doing the math on that, you’re closing in on a million dollars that we’re paying contractors. Whereas, if I spoke good enough Arabic or whatever, then maybe we have [only] one of those guys”

SOF Operator, 95th CAB

Detailed Findings

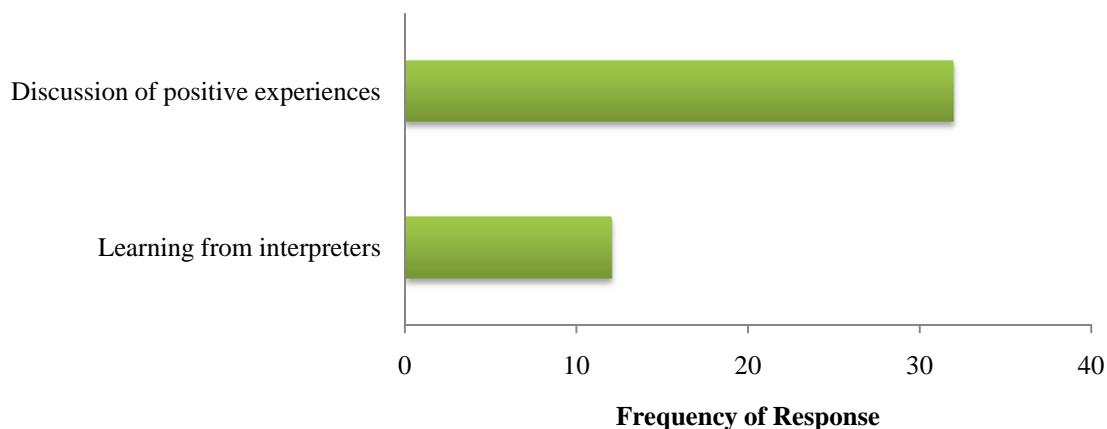
Positive Experiences

Focus group participants provided several examples of positive experiences with interpreters on missions (Figure 32, p. 39). Most of the positive discussion described mission experiences that allowed SOF operators to increase their situational or cultural awareness, including interpreters being used to catch potentially damaging side conversations that were taking place in another language on missions ($n = 32$).

“When the interpreters weren’t around there were a lot more sidebar conversations going on in the language that we didn’t speak ...so having the interpreter was very beneficial to understanding exactly what was going on.”

SOF Operator, 95th CAB

Figure 32. Focus Group Positive Experience Frequencies



¹⁰ Further solutions about command emphasis and solutions to increase team language capability can be found in the following reports: *Training Emphasis* (Technical Report #2010011005), *Admiral Olson’s Memo* (Technical Report #2010011004), and other LCNA reports (see Appendix A for further description).

Other discussion of positive experiences included learning from interpreters while on missions ($n = 12$). Positive experiences included learning cultural information, developing language skills, and building rapport/interaction with the target region:

- Cultural information – “*...interpreters—we go through all this training back here for language and culture, and you hope to be as sensitive as you can be. But then your interpreters are also your—the people that keep you accountable while you’re overseas. They’re really good at staying in tune and constantly reminding you, “You shouldn’t be doing that, sir.”*

SOF Operator, MARSOC

- Developing language skills - *Moderator*: “*Has anyone been on deployment when resources were available for language?*”
SOF Operator: “*I use an interpreter. I usually have one with a list of words I want to know, and they kind of clarify what I need.*”

SOF Operator, MARSOC

- Building Rapport - “*my interpreter mentioned it to us as we were walking in. He said, “Oh, by the way, it’s Ramadan; there’s a special phrase we use for this.” He literally whispered it in my ear and I stuck my hand out and said it, and it was very successful.*”

SOF Operator, 95th CAB

Negative Experiences

Focus group participants described negative experiences with interpreters more frequently than positive experiences (Figure 33, p. 41). The most common negative experience with an interpreter were instances of interpreters having hidden agenda or somehow causing a lack of trust in the accuracy what they were communicating ($n = 47$).

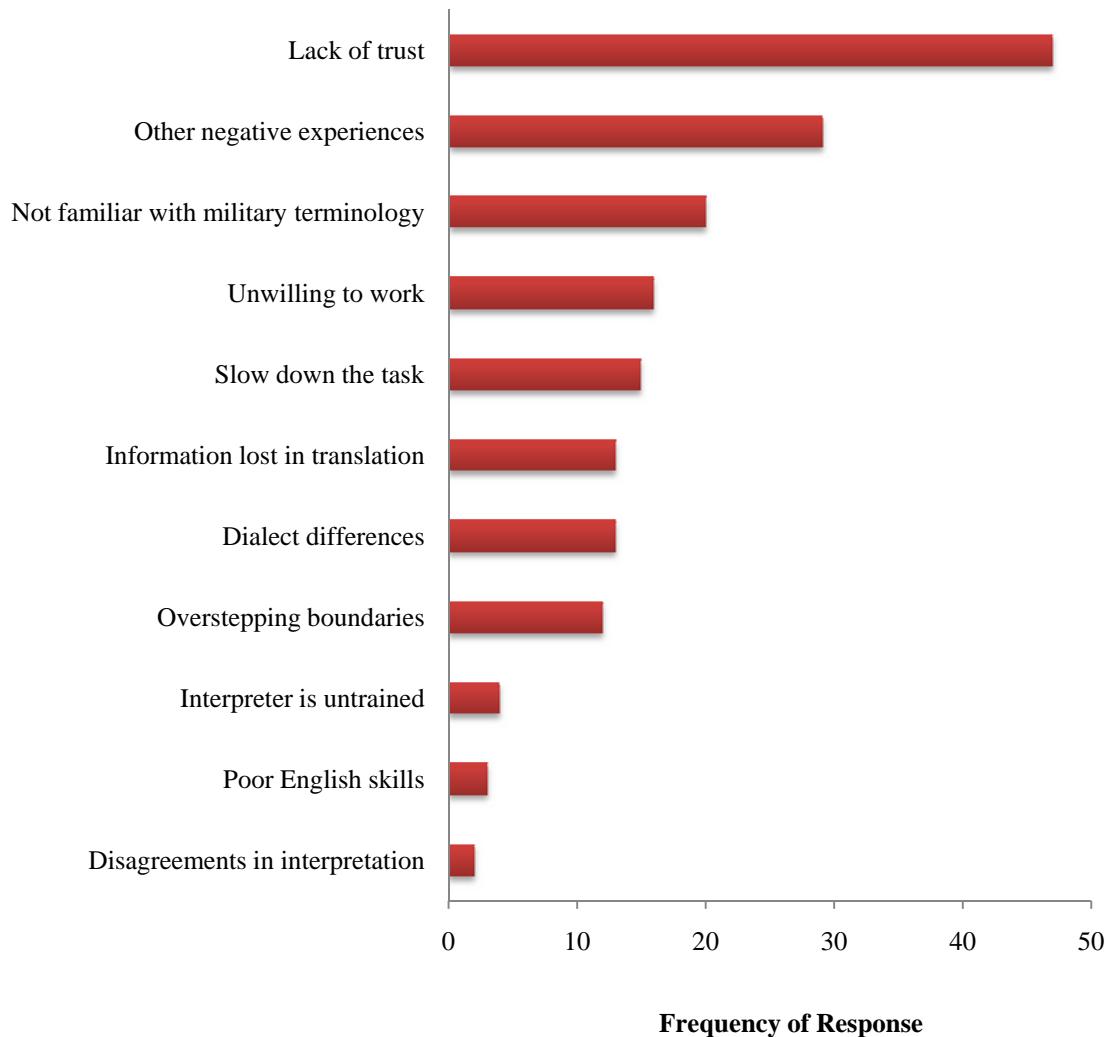
“*You’re trusting them, even when you’re downrange. It’s whatever the terp¹¹ is telling you. If he’s telling you the truth, you’re good to go. But if he’s not, you would not know until it’s too late.*”

SOF Operator, WARCOM

“*if you’re working with interpreters a lot of times there, you don’t know, in a lot of regards, if there’s another agenda going on with that interpreter and with the person that he’s talking to, in a lot of respects—especially if you have absolutely no language ability... It’s very difficult. And there were many times that just either that lack of trust of lack of ability of the interpreter and the person using the interpreter would either cause the missions to slow down, stop sometimes in their tracks, while they figured out what was going on.*”

SOF Operator, 1st Bn, 10th SFG

¹¹ “terp” is slang for interpreter

Figure 33. Focus Group Negative Experience Frequencies

Other types of issues commonly reported during focus groups were due to the interpreter not being familiar with military terminology ($n = 20$) and slowing tasks down ($n = 15$). Lacking appropriate terminology can lead to all sorts of issues from ineffective training, miscommunication, and a harder time conveying a message. Furthermore, these hardships can slow down mission tasks.

“...we were told the guys we were going to teach had English speaking capability. But then we went there when we were trying to do navigation and radios and stuff. It was just like chaos because they had no idea, all the technical terms. They knew English, but they didn’t know [military terms].”

SOF Operator, WARCOM

“...if you’re going to be going on a trip using an interpreter, you need to double the length of the trip because most of your time is going to be talking back and forth to the interpreter. And a lot of times he doesn’t even get what you’re saying. You’ve got to explain it to him before he can tell those guys.”

SOF Operator, WARCOM

SOF operators also described personal issues with interpreters, for example, on several occasions SOF operators indicated that the interpreter was unwilling to do the work ($n = 16$). Other SOF operators described instances in which the interpreters were untrained ($n = 4$), dialect differences hindered translation ($n = 13$), had poor English skills ($n = 2$), or overstepped their boundaries ($n = 12$). The following are example quotes from those areas:

- Unwilling to do work – “*They don’t want to go outside the wire, or else they don’t want to work the hours you want them to work.*”

SOF Operator, WARCOM

- Untrained in how to interpret – “*there’s a proper way to use an interpreter and an improper way [...] he needs to say exactly what you said, and that’s it, no more. Because...they weren’t contractors and they didn’t go through interpreter training even though they spoke English and they spoke Pashto, they don’t know the rules*”

SOF Operator, WARCOM

- Dialect differences – “*...we had issues with—ours is more of a different dialects within the country. We had eight interpreters that worked directly with my office, and we could get four of them to translate one thing and it’d all come out with different translations. And then if we sent that down to another part of the country, it would mean something completely different. That was the biggest thing we had to deal with while we were down there, was just different dialects within the country.*”

SOF Operator, 4th MISG

- Poor English skills – “*...we were having problems talking to them because they spoke the native language a lot more than ours...*”

SOF Operator, WARCOM

- Overstepping the boundaries – “*I’ve seen it really affect the mission is the interpreter who has been working with the US forces gets comfortable with the tactics and thinks that, okay, I can just issue this command... And they come back and say, ‘We never told them to move.’ And it comes to find out that the interpreter heard something and thinks the guy is the across the street, so he goes ahead and sends that team over there anyway.*”

SOF Operator, WARCOM

Connected to the large number of negative experiences was the desire for less reliance on interpreters. During focus groups, SOF operators described how not having individual language capability slowed their mission down, and reduced the effectiveness of each team members.

“Just because they’re an interpreter, it doesn’t mean that they can interpret... It was difficult at best, but you get through. Unfortunately, because we get through, everybody thinks we’re successful. And we could be so much more successful if guys were much better at their languages and able to communicate downrange.”

SOF Operator, AFSOC

“The personnel who did not have the language were minimized because they couldn’t translate, so they either had to have a translator with them or one of the other special operators who could speak the language. So they were reduced to doing menial tasks, and they couldn’t help out as much as the other personnel.”

SOF Operator, WARCOM

Suggestions for Interpreter Use

Along with the positive and negative experiences, SOF operators also mentioned two suggestions: (1) on how to improve interactions with interpreters, and (2) how to decrease interpreter reliance. For improving interaction with interpreters, SOF operators suggested providing training on how to use interpreters ($n = 5$).

“You have to be taught to work with them and train with them a little bit before you actually get out there and get yourself into a situation where they can be detrimental to whatever it is that you’re trying to accomplish.”

SOF Operator, 10th SFG

For decreasing reliance on interpreters, SOF operators described the need for increased command emphasis on enhancing individual language skills ($n = 9$). SOF operators further described the importance of personal language capability to the mission.¹²

“...personally don’t think that language is pushed enough in this component...Having a language ...goes a long way, not only in actually doing your job over there, but just—if you’re going to work with a partner nation building a relationship, if you can speak their language—They will tell you more and they’ll protect you, also. It goes a long way, a long way.”

SOF Operator, WARCOM

¹² The importance of language capability to mission success is further discussed in other reports including, *Inside AOR Use of Language* (Technical Report #2010011010) and *Outside AOR Use of Language* (Technical Report #2010011011).

SECTION VI: CONCLUSION

SOF operators need to be able communicate in the target language in order to accomplish many mission tasks. When SOF operators do not attain or maintain certain levels of foreign language proficiency, there can be consequences for mission success, including miscommunication and increased difficulty.

“It makes it a lot harder. You’re wasting a lot of time trying to figure out something that could be resolved easy if you could communicate.”

SOF Operator, 1st SFG

While language proficiency is an essential and valued skill in the SOF community, the current operational demands sometimes require SOF operators to deploy before they obtain optimum proficiency, or to deploy to areas outside where their trained language is used or outside their AOR. For example, Special Forces (SF) operators’ current graduation standard is a 1/1 (i.e., 1 in speaking and 1 in participatory listening) on the ILR scale, but most SF mission tasks require a 2/2 or higher level for full performance (*US Army Special Forces Language Proficiency Requirements Needs Assessment*, Technical Report #2010010623). Because of these operational demands, SOF operators often rely on interpreters both inside and outside their AOR to communicate with individuals in the host nation and to be successful on missions. This report describes the current reality of interpreter dependence across a variety of mission contexts from the perspective of SOF operators.

Overall, the majority of SOF operators reported using interpreters regardless of whether deployed inside (69%) or outside (91%) their AOR. SOF operators reported a high frequency of use, with most SOF operators using interpreters *every day* on their most recent mission.

Focus group moderator: “How often are you using an interpreter versus being able to communicate using your own language ability?”

SOF operator: “Pretty much constantly [using an interpreter].”

SOF Operator, 5th SFG

With regard to the types of interpreters SOF operators relied on during missions, the most common type used depended on the primary SOF core task:

- CAT I and CAT II/III interpreters were most frequently used on FID, DA, and UW missions.
- CAT I interpreters were most commonly used on CAO missions.
- CAT II/III interpreters were most commonly used on MISO missions.

SOF operators reported they were *very dependent* on their interpreters for mission success. This dependence on interpreters differed among SOF core tasks, specific mission language requirements, and self-rated proficiency levels. In general, personal interpreter dependence was highest for SOF operators on outside AOR missions, for missions requiring SOF operators to perform speaking tasks, and for SOF operators with lower proficiency.

Consistent with this high frequency of use of and dependence on interpreters, most SOF operators rated interpreters as *very important* for mission success. Additionally, 68% of SOF operators deploying outside their AOR indicated it was 0% likely that they would have been successful on their mission without an interpreter, and 44% of SOF operators deploying inside their AOR indicated it was 0% likely that they would have succeeded in their mission without the use of an interpreter. These findings suggest that SOF operators perceive interpreters to be integral to mission success.

“Any mission that we want to be successful on, we have to have an interpreter.”

SOF Operator, 5th SFG

As mentioned, SOF operator reliance on interpreters varied depending on a number of factors, including: (1) the opportunity to complete pre-deployment language training; (2) SOF operators' language proficiency; (3) the difficulty level of the language(s) of the deployment region; (4) the primary SOF core task of the deployment; and (5) the type of language-rated tasks required to accomplish the mission. The relationships of each of these factors with interpreter reliance can be summarized as follows:

- SOF operators who completed pre-deployment language training were less likely to use interpreters both for inside and outside AOR deployments. For inside AOR deployments, those SOF operators who received pre-deployment language training reported their team used interpreters less frequently, were less dependent on interpreters (both at the personal and team level), reported interpreters were less important to mission success, and were more confident they could have achieved mission success *without* an interpreter.
- SOF operators with greater self-rated speaking and listening proficiency were less likely to use interpreters and were less dependent on interpreters than less proficient operators.
- SOF operators deploying to regions where less difficult languages are spoken (i.e., Category I according to the DoD language difficulty categories) used interpreters less often compared to those deploying to regions where more difficult languages are spoken (i.e., Category IV languages).
- SOF operators whose missions required more passive listening and reading tasks (e.g., listening to the radio, reading signs, etc.) were less likely to use interpreters and less dependent on interpreters than operators whose missions required more speaking tasks (e.g., giving commands, persuading people, etc.).
- SOF operators who deployed on MISO, CAO, and FID missions inside the AOR reported less interpreter use than SOF operators deployed inside their AOR on other SOF core missions. SOF operators who deployed outside their AOR reported consistent interpreter use across all SOF core tasks.

SOF operators who participated in focus groups for this project were generally uncomfortable with their teams' heavy reliance on interpreters. Respondents frequently described negative experiences with interpreters. These negative experiences included working with interpreters who were unwilling to do their job, overstepped their authority, slowed down mission progress, and had untrustworthy abilities.

“There were many times that just either that lack of trust in the ability of the interpreter... would either cause the missions to slow down, stop sometimes in their tracks, while they figured out what was going on.”

SOF Operator, 10th SFG

Focus group participants indicated a desire to reduce their reliance on interpreters by placing more focus on personal language capability and language training. Participants also provided suggestions to improve the quality of interactions with interpreters. SOF operators recommended that training be provided on how to correctly and effectively use your interpreter. The *Interpreter Ops: Multi-Service Reference Manual for Interpreter Operations* (2004), is one reference that provides techniques for the effective use of interpreters. The manual outline topics including: (1) selecting and hiring interpreters; (2) how to orient and train interpreters; (3) how to use interpreters for different interactions. More details about interpreter training received by SOF operators is available in the *General Use of Interpreters* report (Technical Report #2010011007).

Overall, there is a heavy reliance on interpreters in the SOF community regardless of deployment conditions. Additionally, comments from the field indicated some problems (e.g., untrustworthiness, inability to or unwillingness to do the job, etc.) with such heavy reliance on interpreters on missions. As such, SOF leadership must determine if the current state of interpreter dependence is acceptable. If dependence on interpreters for mission success is not acceptable, then SOF leadership must take the necessary steps to improve organic language capability. The reality is that interpreters will always be necessary to some degree, especially on outside AOR deployments. However, the question is how dependent SOF operators want to be on interpreters for mission success. SOF leaders can take actions to improve the organic language capability and the effectiveness of interpreter use, in order to reduce the dependence on interpreters for mission success.

Findings indicated several factors lead to less use of and dependence on interpreters for mission success, such as receiving pre-deployment language training and obtaining higher levels of proficiency prior to deployment. These findings lead to the following general recommendations: (1) provide pre-deployment language training to all SOF operators prior to both inside and outside AOR deployments, and (2) develop SOF operators’ speaking proficiency to higher levels. These broad recommendations are discussed and elaborated in relevant Tier II and Tier III reports. Increasing language capability is a complex issue that requires a systematic solution, which is beyond the scope of this Tier I report.

Information from the current report will be combined in those of the *Tier II* report *Use of Interpreters* with information from the *General Use of Interpreters* (Technical Report #2010011007) and *09L Use in the SOF Community* (Technical Report #2010011014) reports to further address these issues and provide a broader picture of interpreter use across the SOF community as well as general recommendations.

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ABOUT SWA CONSULTING INC.

SWA Consulting Inc. (formerly Surface, Ward, and Associates) provides analytics and evidence-based solutions for clients using the principles and methods of industrial/organizational (I/O) psychology. Since 1997, SWA has advised and assisted corporate, non-profit and governmental clients on:

- Training and development
- Performance measurement and management
- Organizational effectiveness
- Test development and validation
- Program/training evaluation
- Work/job analysis
- Needs assessment
- Selection system design
- Study and analysis related to human capital issues
- Metric development and data collection
- Advanced data analysis

One specific practice area is analytics, research, and consulting on foreign language and culture in work contexts. In this area, SWA has conducted numerous projects, including language assessment validation and psychometric research; evaluations of language training, training tools, and job aids; language and culture focused needs assessments and job analysis; and advanced analysis of language research data.

Based in Raleigh, NC, and led by Drs. Eric A. Surface and Stephen J. Ward, SWA now employs close to twenty I/O professionals at the masters and PhD levels. SWA professionals are committed to providing clients the best data and analysis upon which to make evidence-based decisions. Taking a scientist-practitioner perspective, SWA professionals conduct model-based, evidence-driven research and consulting to provide the best answers and solutions to enhance our clients' mission and business objectives. SWA has competencies in measurement, data collection, analytics, data modeling, systematic reviews, validation, and evaluation.

For more information about SWA, our projects, and our capabilities, please visit our website (www.swa-consulting.com) or contact Dr. Eric A. Surface (esurface@swa-consulting.com) or Dr. Stephen J. Ward (sward@swa-consulting.com).

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APPENDIX A: ABOUT THE LCNA PROJECT

In 2003-2004, the Special Operations Forces Language Office (SOFLO) sponsored the *SOF Language Transformation Strategy Needs Assessment Project* to inform the development of a language transformation strategy in response to a GAO report (2003). This *SOF Language Transformation Strategy Needs Assessment Project* collected current-state information about language usage, proficiency, training, and policy issues (e.g., Foreign Language Proficiency Pay, FLPP) from SOF personnel, SOF unit leaders, and other personnel involved in SOF language. The project used multiple data collection methods and provided the SOFLO with valid data to develop a comprehensive language transformation strategy and advocate for the SOF perspective on language issues within the DoD community.

In a continuing effort to update knowledge of language and culture needs while informing strategic plan development, the SOFLO commissioned the *2009 SOF Language and Culture Needs Assessment Project* (LCNA) to reassess the language and culture landscape across the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) and develop a strategy for the next five years. Data were collected between March and November, 2009 from personnel in the SOF community, including SOF operators and leaders. Twenty-three focus groups were conducted between March and June, 2009. A comprehensive, web-based survey for SOF operators and leaders was launched on 26 October and closed on 24 November, 2009.

This project's findings will be disseminated through reports and briefings (see Appendix A, Figure 1). Two foundational reports document the methodology and participants associated with this project. The remaining reports are organized in three tiers. Twenty-five *Tier I* reports focus on specific, limited issues (e.g., *Inside AOR Use of Language*). *Tier II* reports integrate and present the most important findings across related *Tier I* reports (e.g., *Use of Language and Culture on Deployment*) while including additional data and analysis on the topic. Most, but not all, *Tier I* reports will roll into *Tier II* reports. One *Tier III* report presents the most important findings, implications, and recommendations across all topics explored in this project. The remaining *Tier III* reports present findings for specific SOF organizations [e.g., Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC), Special Forces (SF) Command]. All *Tier III* reports are associated with a briefing. Report topics are determined by the SOFLO and subject to change.

In June, 2009, the GAO reported that the Department of Defense is making progress toward transforming language and regional proficiency capabilities but still does not have a strategic plan in place to continue development that includes actionable goals and objectives. The findings from this study can be used by the SOFLO and leaders at USSOCOM to continue strategic planning and development in this area.

This project design, logistics, data collection, initial analysis and first eight reports of this project were conducted by SWA Consulting Inc. (SWA) under a subcontract with SRC (SR20080668 (K142); Prime # N65236-08-D-6805). The additional reports are funded under a separate contracting vehicle with Gemini Industries Inc. [GEM02-ALMBOS-0018 (10210SWA-1); Prime # USZA22-02-D-0015]. For questions or more information about the SOFLO and this project, please contact Mr. Jack Donnelly (john.donnelly@socom.mil). For specific questions related to data collection or reports associated with this project, please contact Dr. Eric A. Surface (esurface@swa-consulting.com) or Dr. Reanna Poncheri Harman (rpharman@swa-consulting.com) with SWA Consulting Inc.

Appendix A, Figure 1. Report Overview



Note: Foundation reports are referenced by every other report. Colors represent Tier I reports that roll (integrate) into an associated Tier II report. Reports in black are final reports on the topic but may be cited by other reports. Tier II reports roll into the Tier III reports. All Tier III reports include an associated briefing.

APPENDIX B: METHODOLOGY

Participants

Focus Group Participants

Twenty-three focus groups were conducted with 126 SOF personnel across the SOF community. Focus groups were conducted with AFSOC, MARSOC, WARCOM, and USASOC (see *Participation Report*, Technical Report #2010011003 for participant details). Verbatim comments and the frequencies of comment themes from these groups about the use of interpreters are integrated in Section V: Comments on Interpreter Use from the Field (see *Methodology Report*, Technical Report #2010011002 for the focus group interview guide).

Survey Participants and Branching

Respondents received the SOF LCNA survey interpreter items if they indicated one of the following roles in the SOF community:

- SOF Operator (e.g., SEAL team member, SF team member, etc.).
- SOF Operator assigned to other duty.

Before SOF operators were presented with the interpreter-related items, they were asked whether or not they (or their team) used interpreters on their most recent mission. There were 681 SOF operators (i.e., SOF operators and SOF operators assigned to other duties) who responded to the survey items in regards to their most recent inside area of responsibility (AOR) mission and 477 SOF operators who responded in regards to their most recent outside AOR mission. Most SOF operator respondents were affiliated with the Army; however, the Marines, Air Force, and Navy were also represented.

SOF leaders were not included in this report. Information about SOF leader perspectives on the use of interpreters are included in the *General Use of Interpreters* report (Technical report #2010011007).

Measures

Items

SOF operators were asked the following regarding interpreters:

- Whether or not used on their most recent mission.¹³
- Type of interpreter used (e.g., CAT I, CAT II/III, etc.).
- How frequently interpreters were personally used.
- How frequently interpreters were used by the team/tactical element.
- How dependent they were on the interpreters.
- How dependent their team was on interpreters.
- How important interpreters were to mission success.

¹³ Only respondents who answered ‘Yes’ to the use of interpreter item were asked the additional interpreter items. Respondents who indicated ‘No’ to the use of interpreter item were included in the overall frequency of use results as ‘Never’ using interpreters.

Additionally, all respondents (whether they indicated using an interpreter or not) were asked to indicate the likelihood (from 0% to 100%) that they would have been able to successfully complete their most recent mission without the use of an interpreter.

Analyses

Survey Items

All survey items for this report were closed-ended and analyzed using a combination of descriptive and inferential statistics. For each item, the frequencies for response options are presented. The average (i.e., mean) response for each item is also presented. To compare responses across Army SOF types, components and between deployment types, inferential statistics (e.g., analysis of variance, t-tests) were used to determine if any observed differences are likely to exist in the broader population of interest. Correlations between responses to different survey items are also presented as measures of association.

Focus Group Items

To analyze the focus group data, two coders created a content code (i.e., theme) list based on available responses. One coder coded all responses to the items, and the second coder coded a series of four sections equaling 30% of the total number of responses. Any disagreements between coders were discussed to agreement. The frequency of occurrence for each theme is presented in Section V of this report. For further details on these methods please refer to the *Methodology Report* (Technical Report #2010011002).

APPENDIX C: INTERPRETER USE TABLES

Appendix C, Table 1. SOF Operator Interpreter Use Inside the AOR by Component and Army SOF Type¹⁴

Used an Interpreter - Inside AOR			
Group	n	Yes	No
All Operators	681	69%	31%
AFSOC	17	35%	65%
MARSOC	12	67%	33%
WARCOM	6	83%	17%
USASOC	512	69%	31%
<i>CA</i>	88	59%	41%
<i>MISG</i>	82	65%	35%
<i>SF</i>	338	72%	28%

Note. SOF operators currently assigned to USSOCOM Head Quarters (HQ), Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC), Theater Special Operations Command (TSOC), or Deployed Special Operations (SO) Unit were included in the ‘All Operators’ category, however, were not independently broken out due to small sample sizes.

Appendix C, Table 2. SOF Operator Interpreter Use Outside the AOR by Component and Army SOF Type

Used an Interpreter - Outside AOR			
Group	n	Yes	No
All Operators	477	91%	9%
AFSOC	6	33%	67%
MARSOC	2	100%	0%
WARCOM	4	75%	25%
USASOC	343	91%	9%
<i>CA</i>	60	87%	13%
<i>MISG</i>	78	90%	10%
<i>SF</i>	200	93%	7%

Note. SOF operators currently assigned to USSOCOM HQ, JSOC, TSOC, or Deployed SO Unit were included in the ‘All Operators’ category, however, were not independently broken out due to small sample sizes.

¹⁴ For appendix tables, group specific sample sizes will not always sum to the overall or ‘All Operators’ row for a given table because respondents did not always indicate their specific group membership (e.g., SOF component, unit, etc.).

Appendix C, Table 3. SOF Operator Interpreter Use Inside the AOR by USASOC Unit

Used an Interpreter - Inside AOR			
Group	n	Yes	No
USASOC Overall	512	69%	31%
SWCS-Staff	15	87%	13%
4th MISG	78	65%	35%
95th CAB	84	58%	42%
1st SFG	47	57%	43%
3rd SFG	58	95%	5%
5th SFG	135	93%	7%
7th SFG	40	5%	95%
10th SFG	20	80%	20%
20th SFG	18	6%	94%

Note. 19th SFG was excluded due to small sample size (n = 4).

Appendix C, Table 4. SOF Operator Interpreter Use Outside the AOR by USASOC Unit

Used an Interpreter - Outside AOR			
Group	n	Yes	No
USASOC Overall	343	91%	9%
SWCS-Staff	12	100%	0%
4th MISG	74	89%	11%
95th CAB	59	86%	14%
1st SFG	31	97%	3%
3rd SFG	25	92%	8%
5th SFG	7	100%	0%
7th SFG	69	93%	7%
10th SFG	42	95%	5%
20th SFG	10	60%	40%

Note. 19th SFG was excluded due to small sample size (n = 3).

Appendix C, Table 5. Interpreter Type Used Inside the AOR by Component and Army SOF Type

Interpreter Type Used - Inside AOR						
Group	n	CAT I	CAT II/III	Both	Multiple	Other
All Operators	469	22%	20%	24%	21%	13%
AFSOC	6	50%	17%	0%	0%	33%
MARSOC	8	50%	0%	25%	0%	25%
WARCOM	5	20%	60%	0%	0%	20%
USASOC	351	22%	19%	25%	20%	14%
CA	52	40%	17%	13%	10%	19%
MISG	53	21%	40%	15%	9%	15%
SF	242	17%	16%	30%	24%	12%

Note. SOF operators currently assigned to USSOCOM HQ, JSOC, TSOC, or Deployed SO Unit were included in the ‘All Operators’ category, however, were not independently broken out due to small sample sizes. Interpreter type categories: *Both* = Used both CAT I and CAT II/III interpreters, *Multiple* = Used an “other” type and either a CAT I or CAT II/III interpreter, *Other* = 09Ls and when SOF operators indicated an “other” type of interpreter.

Appendix C, Table 6. Interpreter Type Used Outside the AOR by Component and Army SOF Type

Interpreter Type Used - Outside AOR						
Group	n	CAT I	CAT II/III	Both	Multiple	Other
All Operators	434	15%	23%	43%	14%	5%
AFSOC	2	0%	0%	50%	0%	50%
MARSOC	2	0%	50%	50%	0%	0%
WARCOM	3	0%	33%	33%	0%	33%
USASOC	311	14%	23%	44%	15%	4%
CA	52	37%	17%	25%	19%	2%
MISG	69	12%	49%	25%	12%	3%
SF	186	10%	15%	56%	15%	5%

Note. SOF operators currently assigned to USSOCOM HQ, JSOC, TSOC, or Deployed SO Unit were included in the ‘All Operators’ category, however, were not independently broken out due to small sample sizes. Interpreter type categories: *Both* = Used both CAT I and CAT II/III interpreters, *Multiple* = Used an “other” type and either a CAT I or CAT II/III interpreter, *Other* = 09Ls and when SOF operators indicated an “other” type of interpreter.

Appendix C, Table 7. Interpreter Type Used Inside the AOR by USASOC Unit

Interpreter Type Used - Inside AOR						
Group	n	CAT I	CAT II/III	Both	Multiple	Other
USASOC Overall	351	22%	19%	25%	20%	14%
SWCS-Staff	13	23%	15%	31%	23%	8%
4th MISG	51	22%	39%	14%	10%	16%
95th CAB	49	39%	18%	14%	8%	20%
1st SFG	27	44%	4%	4%	11%	37%
3rd SFG	55	25%	11%	53%	9%	2%
5th SFG	126	6%	21%	28%	36%	10%
10th SFG	16	13%	25%	25%	13%	25%

Note. 7th (n = 2), 19th (n = 4), and 20th (n = 1) SFG were excluded due to small sample sizes. Both = Used both CAT I and CAT II/III interpreters, Multiple = Used an “other” type and either a CAT I or CAT II/III interpreter, Other = 09Ls and when SOF operators indicated an “other” type of interpreter.

Appendix C, Table 8. Interpreter Type Used Outside the AOR by USASOC Unit

Interpreter Type Used - Outside AOR						
Group	n	CAT I	CAT II or III	Both	Multiple	Other
USASOC Overall	311	15%	23%	44%	15%	4%
SWCS-Staff	12	8%	8%	50%	8%	25%
4th MISG	65	11%	51%	25%	12%	2%
95th CAB	51	37%	18%	24%	20%	2%
1st SFG	30	13%	10%	57%	10%	10%
3rd SFG	23	4%	22%	61%	13%	0%
5th SFG	7	14%	0%	0%	57%	29%
7th SFG	64	6%	5%	89%	0%	0%
10th SFG	40	10%	30%	25%	33%	3%
20th SFG	6	33%	33%	17%	17%	0%

Note. 19th SFG was excluded due to small sample size (n = 3). Both = Used both CAT I and CAT II/III interpreters, Multiple = Used an “other” type and either a CAT I or CAT II/III interpreter, Other = 09Ls and when SOF operators indicated an “other” type of interpreter.

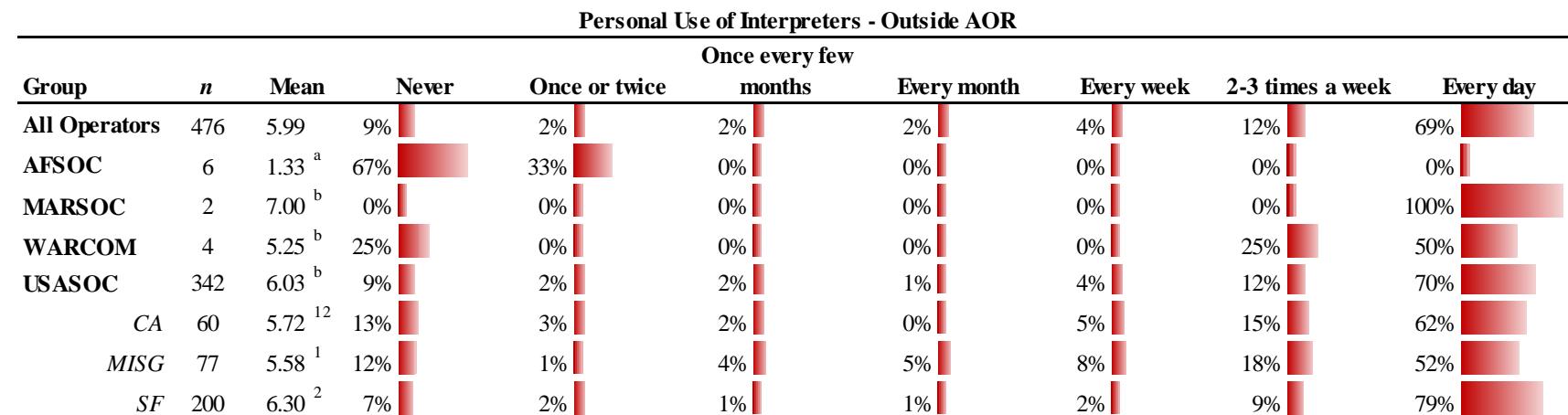
APPENDIX D: RELIANCE ON INTERPRETERS TABLES

Appendix D, Table 1. Frequency of Personal Interpreter Use Inside the AOR by Component and Army SOF type

Personal Use of Interpreters - Inside AOR										
Group	n	Mean	Once every few months							
			Never	Once or twice	months	Every month	Every week	2-3 times a week	Every day	
All Operators	680	4.68	33%	2%	2%	2%	2%	12%	48%	
AFSOC	17	2.35	71%	6%	0%	0%	6%	0%	18%	
MARSOC	12	4.92	33%	0%	0%	0%	0%	8%	58%	
WARCOM	6	4.50	33%	0%	0%	17%	0%	0%	50%	
USASOC	512	4.70	32%	1%	2%	2%	2%	11%	49%	
CA	88	3.91 ^a	43%	0%	5%	5%	1%	16%	31%	
MISG	82	4.18 ^a	35%	4%	4%	7%	2%	10%	38%	
SF	338	5.01 ^b	29%	1%	1%	0%	2%	10%	56%	

Note. SOF operators currently assigned to USSOCOM HQ, JSOC, TSOC, or Deployed SO Unit were included in the 'All Operators' category, however, were not independently broken out due to small sample sizes. No subgroup differences were found between components. Army SOF type subgroups sharing the same letter (e.g., a or b) did not report significantly different frequency perceptions. Army SOF type subgroups NOT sharing the same letter within components or within Army SOF type did report significantly different frequency perceptions. Please refer to the mean to determine which group provided higher interpreter use ratings. Frequency scale: 1 = Never, 2 = Once or twice, 3 = Once every few months, 4 = Every month, 5 = Every week, 6 = 2-3 times a week, 7 = Every day. Respondents who indicated 'No' to the use of interpreter item were coded as 'Never' in the values presented in this table.

Appendix D, Table 2. Frequency of Personal Interpreter Use Outside the AOR by Component and Army SOF type



Note. SOF operators currently assigned to USSOCOM HQ, JSOC, TSOC, or Deployed SO Unit were included in the 'All Operators' category, however, were not independently broken out due to small sample sizes. Component subgroups sharing the same letter (e.g., a or b) or Army SOF type subgroups sharing the same number (e.g., 1 or 2) did not report significantly different frequency perceptions. Subgroups NOT sharing the same letter or number did report significantly different frequency perceptions. Please refer to the mean to determine which group provided higher interpreter use ratings. Frequency scale values for interpreting the means: 1 = Never, 2 = Once or twice, 3 = Once every few months, 4 = Every month, 5 = Every week, 6 = 2-3 times a week, 7 = Every day. Respondents who indicated 'No' to the use of interpreter item were coded as 'Never' in the values presented in this table.

Appendix D, Table 3. Frequency of Personal Interpreter Use Inside the AOR by USASOC Unit

Personal Use of Interpreters - Inside AOR									
Group	n	Mean	Once every few months						
			Never	Once or twice	months	Every month	Every week	2-3 times a week	Every day
USASOC Overall	512	4.70	32%	1%	2%	2%	2%	11%	49%
SWCS-Staff	15	6.00 *	13%	0%	0%	0%	7%	7%	73%
4th MISG	78	4.22 *	35%	4%	4%	8%	1%	10%	38%
95th CAB	84	3.83 *	44%	0%	5%	5%	1%	17%	29%
1st SFG	47	4.17 *	43%	2%	0%	2%	2%	6%	45%
3rd SFG	58	6.52 *	5%	0%	3%	0%	0%	3%	88%
5th SFG	135	6.15 *	7%	2%	0%	0%	5%	19%	66%
7th SFG	40	1.15 *	98%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%
10th SFG	20	5.75 *	20%	0%	0%	0%	0%	5%	75%
19th SFG	6	4.00	33%	0%	17%	0%	0%	33%	17%
20th SFG	18	1.33 *	94%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	6%

Note. Asterisks (*) indicate groups are significantly different from each other. Specifically, 7th and 20th SFG are significantly lower than SWCS-Staff, 4th MISG, 95th CAB, 1st SFG, 3rd SFG, 5th SFG, 10th SFG, 4th MISG, 95th CAB, and 1st SFG is significantly lower than 3rd SFG and 5th SFG. 95th CAB is also significantly lower than 10th SFG.¹⁵ Frequency scale values for interpreting the means: 1 = Never, 2 = Once or twice, 3 = Once every few months, 4 = Every month, 5 = Every week, 6 = 2-3 times a week, 7 = Every day. Respondents who indicated 'No' to the use of interpreter item were coded as 'Never' in the values presented in this table.

¹⁵ Due to the large number of comparisons, differences between specific units are described in this and subsequent USASOC unit comparison table notes.

Appendix D, Table 4. Frequency of Personal Interpreter Use Outside the AOR by USASOC Unit

Group	<i>n</i>	Mean	Personal Use of Interpreters - Outside AOR						
			Never	Once or twice	Once every few months	Every month	Every week	2-3 times a week	Every day
USASOC Overall	342	6.03	9%	2%	2%	1%	4%	12%	70%
SWCS-Staff	12	6.42	0%	0%	0%	0%	25%	8%	67%
4th MISG	73	5.78	12%	1%	4%	5%	5%	18%	53%
95th CAB	59	5.73	14%	3%	2%	0%	3%	15%	63%
1st SFG	31	5.94	3%	13%	0%	0%	3%	16%	65%
3rd SFG	25	6.52	8%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	92%
5th SFG	7	6.29	0%	0%	0%	0%	14%	43%	43%
7th SFG	69	6.54	7%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	90%
10th SFG	42	6.21	5%	0%	5%	2%	5%	14%	69%
20th SFG	10	4.50	40%	0%	0%	0%	0%	10%	50%

Note. 19th SFG was not reported due to small sample size (*n* = 3). USASOC unit subgroups were not significantly different from each other. Frequency scale values for interpreting the means: 1 = Never, 2 = Once or twice, 3 = Once every few months, 4 = Every month, 5 = Every week, 6 = 2-3 times a week, 7 = Every day. Respondents who indicated 'No' to the use of interpreter item were coded as 'Never' in the values presented in this table.

Appendix D, Table 5. Team Use of Interpreters Inside the AOR by Component and Army SOF Type

Team Use of Interpreters - Inside AOR									
Group	n	Mean	Once every few months						
			Never	Once or twice	months	Every month	Every week	2-3 times a week	Every day
All Operators	679	4.86	32%	1%	1%	2%	2%	6%	57%
AFSOC	17	3.06	65%	0%	0%	0%	0%	6%	29%
MARSOC	12	5.00	33%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	67%
WARCOM	6	5.33	17%	0%	0%	17%	0%	17%	50%
USASOC	511	4.81	32%	1%	1%	2%	2%	6%	56%
CA	88	3.96 ^a	43%	0%	5%	3%	3%	10%	35%
MISG	82	4.24 ^a	37%	4%	1%	7%	2%	6%	43%
SF	337	5.15 ^b	29%	1%	0%	1%	2%	5%	64%

Note. SOF operators currently assigned to USSOCOM HQ, JSOC, TSOC, or Deployed SO Unit were included in the 'All Operators' category, however, were not independently broken out due to small sample sizes. No subgroup differences were found between components. Army SOF type subgroups sharing the same letter (e.g., a or b) did not report significantly different frequency perceptions. Subgroups NOT sharing the same letter did report significantly different frequency perceptions. Please refer to the mean to determine which group provided higher interpreter use ratings. Frequency scale values for interpreting the means: 1 = Never, 2 = Once or twice, 3 = Once every few months, 4 = Every month, 5 = Every week, 6 = 2-3 times a week, 7 = Every day. Respondents who indicated 'No' to the use of interpreter item were coded as 'Never' in the values presented in this table.

Appendix D, Table 6. Team Use of Interpreters Outside the AOR by Component and Army SOF Type

Team Use of Interpreters - Outside AOR									
Group	n	Mean	Once every few months						
			Never	Once or twice	months	Every month	Every week	2-3 times a week	Every day
All Operators	472	6.17	10%	1%	1%	1%	2%	7%	77%
AFSOC	6	2.67 ^a	67%	0%	0%	0%	17%	0%	17%
MARSOC	2	7.00 ^{ab}	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
WARCOM	4	5.50 ^{ab}	25%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	75%
USASOC	339	6.18 ^b	9%	1%	1%	1%	2%	6%	78%
CA	60	5.88	15%	0%	2%	2%	0%	10%	72%
MISG	76	5.91	11%	1%	1%	4%	5%	12%	66%
SF	198	6.39	7%	2%	1%	1%	1%	4%	85%

Note. SOF operators currently assigned to USSOCOM HQ, JSOC, TSOC, or Deployed SO Unit were included in the 'All Operators' category, however, were not independently broken out due to small sample sizes. No subgroup differences were found between Army SOF type subgroups. SOF components sharing the same letter (e.g., a or b) did not report significantly different frequency perceptions. Subgroups NOT sharing the same letter did report significantly different frequency perceptions. Please refer to the mean to determine which group provided higher interpreter use ratings. Frequency scale values for interpreting the means: 1 = Never, 2 = Once or twice, 3 = Once every few months, 4 = Every month, 5 = Every week, 6 = 2-3 times a week, 7 = Every day. Respondents who indicated 'No' to the use of interpreter item were coded as 'Never' in the values presented in this table.

Appendix D, Table 7. Team Use of Interpreters Inside the AOR by USASOC Unit

Group	<i>n</i>	Mean	Team Use of Interpreters - Inside AOR							
			Once every few months							
			Never	Once or twice	months	Every month	Every week	2-3 times a week	Every day	
USASOC Overall	511	4.81	32%	1%	1%	2%	2%	6%	56%	
SWCS-Staff	15	6.00 *	13%	0%	0%	0%	7%	7%	73%	
4th MISG	78	4.28 *	36%	4%	1%	8%	1%	6%	44%	
95th CAB	84	3.88 *	44%	0%	5%	4%	4%	11%	33%	
1st SFG	47	4.30	43%	0%	0%	2%	4%	0%	51%	
3rd SFG	58	6.57 *	5%	0%	2%	0%	0%	5%	88%	
5th SFG	134	6.43 *	7%	0%	0%	1%	3%	9%	81%	
7th SFG	40	1.15 *	98%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	
10th SFG	20	5.80 *	20%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	80%	
19th SFG	6	4.33	33%	0%	17%	0%	0%	0%	50%	
20th SFG	18	1.33 *	94%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	6%	

Note. Asterisks (*) indicate groups that are significantly different from each other. Specifically, 7th and 20th SFG are significantly lower than SWCS-Staff, 4th MISG, 95th CAB, 1st SFG, 3rd SFG, 5th SFG, 10th SFG, 4th MISG, 95th CAB, and 1st SFG is significantly lower than 3rd SFG and 5th SFG. 95th CAB is also significantly lower than 10th SFG. Frequency scale: 1 = Never, 2 = Once or twice, 3 = Once every few months, 4 = Every month, 5 = Every week, 6 = 2-3 times a week, 7 = Every day. Respondents who indicated 'No' to the use of interpreter item were coded as 'Never' in the values presented in this table.

Appendix D, Table 8. Team Use of Interpreters Outside the AOR by USASOC Unit

Group	<i>n</i>	Mean	Team Use of Interpreters - Outside AOR						
			Never	Once or twice	Once every few months	Every month	Every week	2-3 times a week	Every day
USASOC Overall	472	6.17	10%	1%	1%	1%	2%	7%	77%
SWCS-Staff	12	6.83	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	17%	83%
4th MISG	72	5.88	11%	1%	1%	4%	6%	10%	67%
95th CAB	59	5.86	15%	0%	2%	2%	0%	10%	71%
1st SFG	30	6.07	3%	10%	3%	0%	3%	3%	77%
3rd SFG	25	6.52	8%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	92%
5th SFG	7	6.57	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	43%	57%
7th SFG	68	6.53	7%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	90%
10th SFG	42	6.48	5%	0%	2%	2%	2%	2%	86%
20th SFG	10	4.60	40%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	60%

Note. 19th SFG was not reported due to small sample size (*n* = 3). USASOC units were not significantly different in their team use of interpreter ratings. Frequency scale: 1 = Never, 2 = Once or twice, 3 = Once every few months, 4 = Every month, 5 = Every week, 6 = 2-3 times a week, 7 = Every day. Respondents who indicated 'No' to the use of interpreter item were coded as 'Never' in the values presented in this table.

Appendix D, Table 9. Correlations between the Importance of Language-related Tasks to Mission Success and Personal Interpreter Use

Task	Inside AOR	Outside AOR
Listen to the radio	.062	.059
Listen to conversations	.075	.078
Read signs	.094*	.097
Write lists	.136*	.109*
Discrete eavesdropping	.154*	.104*
Increase situational awareness	.169*	.113*
Read to identify documents	.115*	.193*
Use street dialects	.189*	.120*
Train others	.168*	.146*
Make informal greetings	.197*	.142*
Build rapport	.243*	.151*
Make formal greetings	.198*	.201*
Conduct business negotiations	.182*	.242*
Use military-technical vocabulary	.265*	.159*
Persuading people	.277*	.163*
Maintaining control in hostile situations	.256*	.276*
Give commands	.282*	.309*

Note. Correlation values with asterisks (*) were significant ($p < .05$).

Appendix D, Table 10. Correlations between the Importance of Language-related Tasks to Mission Success and Team Interpreter Use

Task	Inside AOR	Outside AOR
Listen to conversations	-.005	.066*
Listen to the radio	-.017	.093*
Write lists	.052	.116*
Read signs	.034	.144*
Discrete eavesdropping	.091	.095*
Use street dialects	.112*	.137*
Increase situational awareness	.113*	.143*
Read to identify documents	.061	.212*
Make informal greetings	.143*	.154*
Train others	.133*	.171*
Make formal greetings	.130*	.185*
Conduct business negotiations	.106*	.213*
Build rapport	.170*	.198*
Persuading people	.215*	.171*
Use military-technical vocabulary	.233*	.199*
Maintaining control in hostile situations	.189*	.261*
Give commands	.239*	.338*

Note. Correlation values with asterisks (*) were significant ($p < .05$).

Appendix D, Table 11. Personal Dependence on Interpreters Inside the AOR by Component and Army SOF Type

Personal Dependence on Interpreters - Inside AOR							
Group	n	Mean	Not Dependent	Slightly Dependent	Moderately Dependent	Dependent	Very Dependent
All Operators	467	4.17	5%	6%	12%	22%	56%
AFSOC	6	3.00	33%	0%	17%	33%	17%
MARSOC	8	4.38	0%	0%	25%	13%	63%
WARCOM	5	3.20	20%	20%	20%	0%	40%
USASOC	350	4.23	4%	6%	11%	22%	57%
CA	51	4.04	12%	8%	2%	22%	57%
MISG	53	4.08	8%	11%	11%	6%	64%
SF	242	4.29	1%	5%	13%	26%	55%

Note. SOF operators currently assigned to USSOCOM HQ, JSOC, TSOC, or Deployed SO Unit were included in the 'All Operators' category, however, were not independently broken out due to small sample sizes. No subgroup differences were found between components or Army SOF type. Dependence scale values for interpreting the means: 1 = Not Dependent, 2 = Slightly Dependent, 3 = Moderately Dependent, 4 = Dependent, 5 = Very Dependent.

Appendix D, Table 12. Personal Dependence on Interpreters Outside the AOR by Component and Army SOF Type

Personal Dependence on Interpreters - Outside AOR							
Group	n	Mean	Not Dependent	Slightly Dependent	Moderately Dependent	Dependent	Very Dependent
All Operators	433	4.48	1%	5%	9%	15%	70%
AFSOC	2	2.50	0%	50%	50%	0%	0%
MARSOC	2	4.50	0%	0%	0%	50%	50%
WARCOM	3	4.33	0%	0%	33%	0%	67%
USASOC	311	4.51	1%	4%	9%	16%	70%
CA	52	4.44	2%	8%	6%	13%	71%
MISG	69	4.54	1%	1%	12%	13%	72%
SF	186	4.51	1%	4%	9%	19%	68%

Note. SOF operators currently assigned to USSOCOM HQ, JSOC, TSOC, or Deployed SO Unit were included in the 'All Operators' category, however, were not independently broken out due to small sample sizes. No subgroup differences were found between components or Army SOF type. Dependence scale values for interpreting the means: 1 = Not Dependent, 2 = Slightly Dependent, 3 = Moderately Dependent, 4 = Dependent, 5 = Very Dependent.

Appendix D, Table 13. Personal Dependence on Interpreters Inside the AOR by USASOC Unit

Group	n	Mean	Personal Dependence on Interpreters - Inside AOR				
			Not Dependent	Slightly Dependent	Moderately Dependent	Dependent	Very Dependent
USASOC Overall	350	4.23	4%	6%	11%	22%	57%
SWCS-Staff	13	4.23	8%	0%	15%	15%	62%
4th MISG	51	4.12	6%	12%	12%	6%	65%
95th CAB	48	4.02	13%	8%	0%	23%	56%
1st SFG	27	3.89	0%	15%	22%	22%	41%
3rd SFG	55	4.67	0%	4%	2%	18%	76%
5th SFG	126	4.14	2%	4%	18%	29%	47%
10th SFG	16	4.69	0%	0%	6%	19%	75%

Note. 7th (n = 2), 19th (n = 4), and 20th (n = 1) SFG were excluded due to small sample sizes. There were no subgroup differences found between USASOC Units. Dependence scale values for interpreting the means: 1 = Not Dependent, 2 = Slightly Dependent, 3 = Moderately Dependent, 4 = Dependent, 5 = Very Dependent.

Appendix D, Table 14. Personal Dependence on Interpreters Outside the AOR by USASOC Unit

Group	<i>n</i>	Mean	Personal Dependence on Interpreters - Outside AOR				
			Not Dependent	Slightly Dependent	Moderately Dependent	Dependent	Very Dependent
USASOC Overall	311	4.51	1%	4%	9%	16%	70%
SWCS-Staff	12	4.67 ^{a b}	0%	8%	0%	8%	83%
4th MISG	65	4.55 ^{a b}	2%	0%	12%	14%	72%
95th CAB	51	4.43 ^{a b}	2%	8%	6%	14%	71%
1st SFG	30	3.97 ^a	3%	10%	20%	20%	47%
3rd SFG	23	4.70 ^{a b}	0%	0%	4%	22%	74%
5th SFG	7	3.71 ^{a b}	0%	29%	0%	43%	29%
7th SFG	64	4.72 ^b	0%	2%	5%	14%	80%
10th SFG	40	4.43 ^{a b}	0%	3%	15%	20%	63%
20th SFG	6	4.67 ^{a b}	0%	0%	0%	33%	67%

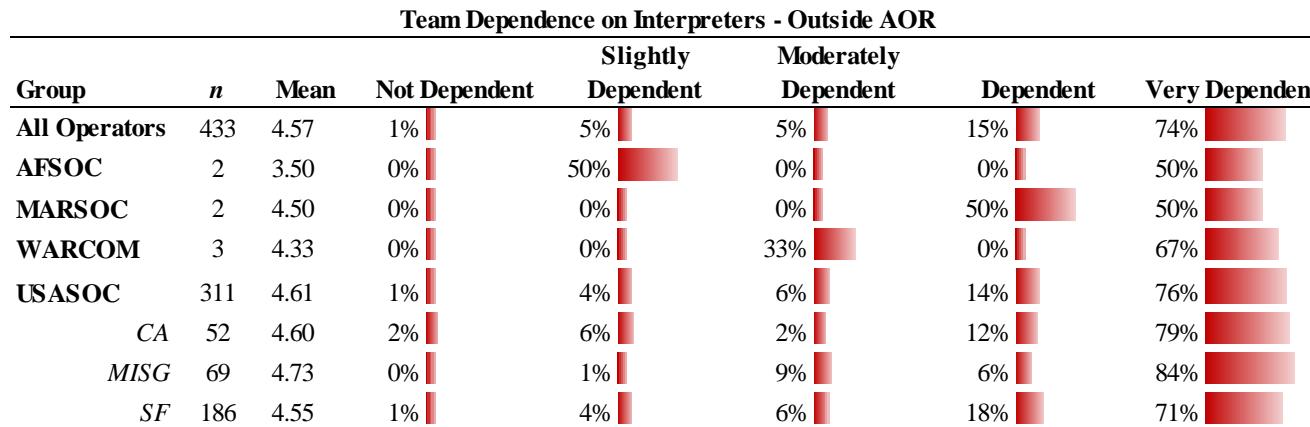
Note. 19th was excluded due to small sample size (*n* = 3). USASOC unit subgroups sharing the same letter (e.g., a or b) did not report significantly different dependence perceptions. Subgroups NOT sharing the same letter did report significantly different dependence perceptions. Please refer to the mean to determine which group provided higher dependence ratings. Dependence scale values for interpreting the means: 1 = Not Dependent, 2 = Slightly Dependent, 3 = Moderately Dependent, 4 = Dependent, 5 = Very Dependent.

Appendix D, Table 15. Team Dependence on Interpreters Inside the AOR by Component and Army SOF Type

Team Dependence on Interpreters - Inside AOR							
Group	n	Mean	Not Dependent	Slightly Dependent	Moderately Dependent	Dependent	Very Dependent
All Operators	467	4.33	2%	5%	12%	20%	61%
AFSOC	6	4.17	0%	0%	33%	17%	50%
MARSOC	8	4.75	0%	0%	0%	25%	75%
WARCOM	5	3.60	0%	40%	0%	20%	40%
USASOC	350	4.32	3%	5%	12%	21%	60%
CA	51	4.00	10%	10%	8%	16%	57%
MISG	53	4.38	4%	8%	6%	13%	70%
SF	242	4.37	1%	3%	14%	24%	59%

Note. SOF operators currently assigned to USSOCOM HQ, JSOC, TSOC, or Deployed SO Unit were included in the 'All Operators' category, however, were not independently broken out due to small sample sizes. No subgroup differences were found between components or Army SOF type. Dependence scale values for interpreting the means: 1 = Not Dependent, 2 = Slightly Dependent, 3 = Moderately Dependent, 4 = Dependent, 5 = Very Dependent.

Appendix D, Table 16. Team Dependence on Interpreters Outside the AOR by Component and Army SOF Type



Note. SOF operators currently assigned to USSOCOM HQ, JSOC, TSOC, or Deployed SO Unit were included in the 'All Operators' category, however, were not independently broken out due to small sample sizes. No subgroup statistical differences between components or Army SOF type were found.
 Dependence scale: 1 = Not Dependent, 2 = Slightly Dependent, 3 = Moderately Dependent, 4 = Dependent, 5 = Very Dependent.

Appendix D, Table 17. Team Dependence on Interpreters Inside the AOR by USASOC Unit

Team Dependence on Interpreters - Inside AOR							
Group	n	Mean	Not Dependent	Slightly Dependent	Moderately Dependent	Dependent	Very Dependent
USASOC Overall	350	4.32 ^{ab}	3%	5%	12%	21%	60%
SWCS-Staff	13	4.31 ^{ab}	8%	0%	8%	23%	62%
4th MISG	51	4.43 ^{ab}	2%	8%	6%	14%	71%
95th CAB	48	3.98 ^b	10%	10%	6%	17%	56%
1st SFG	27	3.93 ^{ab}	4%	7%	26%	19%	44%
3rd SFG	55	4.73 ^a	0%	2%	2%	18%	78%
5th SFG	126	4.21 ^{ab}	1%	3%	19%	28%	49%
10th SFG	16	4.81 ^{ab}	0%	0%	6%	6%	88%

Note. 7th (n = 2), 19th (n = 4), and 20th (n = 1) SFG were excluded due to small sample sizes. USASOC unit subgroups sharing the same letter (e.g., a or b) did not report significantly different dependence perceptions. Subgroups NOT sharing the same letter did report significantly different dependence perceptions. Please refer to the mean to determine which group provided higher dependence ratings. Dependence scale values for interpreting the means: 1 = Not Dependent, 2 = Slightly Dependent, 3 = Moderately Dependent, 4 = Dependent, 5 = Very Dependent.

Appendix D, Table 18. Team Dependence on Interpreters Outside the AOR by USASOC Unit

Team Dependence on Interpreters - Outside AOR							
Group	n	Mean	Not Dependent	Slightly Dependent	Moderately Dependent	Dependent	Very Dependent
USASOC Overall	311	4.61	1%	4%	6%	14%	76%
SWCS-Staff	12	4.75 ^{ab}	0%	0%	8%	8%	83%
4th MISG	65	4.74 ^{ab}	0%	2%	8%	6%	85%
95th CAB	51	4.59 ^{ab}	2%	6%	2%	12%	78%
1st SFG	30	4.17 ^a	3%	7%	13%	23%	53%
3rd SFG	23	4.65 ^{ab}	0%	0%	4%	26%	70%
5th SFG	7	4.00 ^{ab}	0%	14%	14%	29%	43%
7th SFG	64	4.78 ^b	0%	2%	3%	11%	84%
10th SFG	40	4.38 ^{ab}	0%	8%	10%	20%	63%
20th SFG	6	4.67 ^{ab}	0%	0%	0%	33%	67%

Note. 19th SFG was excluded due to small sample size ($n = 3$). USASOC unit subgroups sharing the same letter (e.g., a or b) did not report significantly different dependence perceptions. Subgroups NOT sharing the same letter did report significantly different dependence perceptions. Please refer to the mean to determine which group provided higher dependence ratings. Dependence scale values for interpreting the means: 1 = Not Dependent, 2 = Slightly Dependent, 3 = Moderately Dependent, 4 = Dependent, 5 = Very Dependent.

Appendix D, Table 19. Correlations between the Importance of Language-related Tasks to Mission Success and Personal Interpreter Dependence

Task	Inside AOR	Outside AOR
Listen to conversations	.002	.166*
Listen to the radio	.028	.193*
Use street dialects	.066	.165*
Read signs	.058	.187*
Discrete eavesdropping	.074	.174*
Make informal greetings	.093*	.189*
Train others	.091	.193*
Increase situational awareness	.086	.205*
Conduct business negotiations	.061	.245*
Write lists	.132*	.183*
Make formal greetings	.089	.231*
Build rapport	.120*	.245*
Read to identify documents	.118*	.270*
Use military-technical vocabulary	.203*	.224*
Give commands	.211*	.263*
Maintaining control in hostile situations	.176*	.312*
Persuading people	.209*	.292*

Note. Correlation values with asterisks (*) were significant ($p < .05$).

Appendix D, Table 20. Correlations between the Importance of Language-related Tasks to Mission Success and Team Interpreter Dependence

Task	Inside AOR	Outside AOR
Listen to conversations	-.037	.113*
Use street dialects	.009	.149*
Discrete eavesdropping	.036	.153*
Write lists	.069	.126*
Make informal greetings	.026	.191*
Conduct business negotiations	.012	.211*
Read signs	.051	.174*
Listen to the radio	.014	.182*
Make formal greetings	.039	.211*
Increase situational awareness	.040	.213*
Train others	.087	.190*
Build rapport	.084	.230*
Read to identify documents	.113*	.225*
Use military-technical vocabulary	.162*	.196*
Maintaining control in hostile situations	.121*	.283*
Give commands	.156*	.255*
Persuading people	.168*	.266*

Note. Correlation values with asterisks (*) were significant ($p < .05$).

APPENDIX E: IMPORTANCE OF INTERPRETERS TABLES

Appendix E, Table 1. Importance of Interpreters Inside the AOR by Component and Army SOF Type

Importance of Interpreters - Inside AOR								
Group	n	Mean	Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Important	Very Important	
All Operators	467	4.30	2%	6%	12%	21%	59%	
AFSOC	6	4.17	0%	0%	33%	17%	50%	
MARSOC	8	4.13	0%	13%	13%	25%	50%	
WARCOM	5	3.80	0%	20%	20%	20%	40%	
USASOC	349	4.30	3%	6%	11%	20%	61%	
CA	51	4.18	10%	8%	0%	20%	63%	
MISG	53	4.45	4%	6%	11%	0%	79%	
SF	241	4.28	1%	6%	13%	24%	56%	

Note. SOF operators currently assigned to USSOCOM HQ, JSOC, TSOC, or Deployed SO Unit were included in the 'All Operators' category, however, were not independently broken out due to small sample sizes. No subgroup differences were found between components or Army SOF types. Importance scale: 1 = Not Important, 2 = Slightly Important, 3 = Moderately Important, 4 = Important, 5 = Very Important.

Appendix E, Table 2. Importance of Interpreters Outside the AOR by Component and Army SOF Type

Importance of Interpreters - Outside AOR							
Group	n	Mean	Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Important	Very Important
All Operators	432	4.60	1%	3%	6%	16%	75%
AFSOC	2	4.00	0%	0%	50%	0%	50%
MARSOC	2	4.00	0%	0%	50%	0%	50%
WARCOM	3	4.67	0%	0%	0%	33%	67%
USASOC	310	4.65	1%	2%	5%	16%	76%
CA	51	4.73	0%	2%	6%	10%	82%
MISG	69	4.74	0%	1%	4%	13%	81%
SF	186	4.59	2%	2%	4%	20%	72%

Note. SOF operators currently assigned to USSOCOM HQ, JSOC, TSOC, or Deployed SO Unit were included in the 'All Operators' category, however, were not independently broken out due to small sample sizes. No differences were found between component or Army SOF type subgroups. Importance scale: 1 = Not Important, 2 = Slightly Important, 3 = Moderately Important, 4 = Important, 5 = Very Important.

Appendix E, Table 3. Importance of Interpreters Inside the AOR by USASOC Unit

Importance of Interpreters - Inside AOR							
Group	n	Mean	Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Important	Very Important
USASOC Overall	349	4.30 ^{ab}	3%	6%	11%	20%	61%
SWCS-Staff	13	4.15 ^{ab}	8%	8%	0%	31%	54%
4th MISG	51	4.57 ^a	2%	4%	12%	0%	82%
95th CAB	48	4.15 ^{ab}	10%	8%	0%	19%	63%
1st SFG	27	3.70 ^b	4%	15%	19%	33%	30%
3rd SFG	55	4.55 ^{ab}	0%	4%	9%	16%	71%
5th SFG	125	4.18 ^{ab}	2%	6%	15%	26%	51%
10th SFG	16	4.75 ^{ab}	0%	0%	6%	13%	81%

Note. 7th (n = 2), 19th (n = 4), and 20th (n = 1) SFG were excluded due to small sample sizes. USASOC unit subgroups sharing the same letter (e.g., a or b) did not report significantly different importance perceptions. Subgroups NOT sharing the same letter did report significantly different importance perceptions. Please refer to the mean to determine which group provided higher importance ratings. Importance scale: 1 = Not Important, 2 = Slightly Important, 3 = Moderately Important, 4 = Important, 5 = Very Important.

Appendix E, Table 4. Importance of Interpreters Outside the AOR by USASOC Unit

Importance of Interpreters - Outside AOR							
Group	n	Mean	Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Important	Very Important
USASOC Overall	310	4.65	1%	2%	5%	16%	76%
SWCS-Staff	12	4.67 ^{ab}	0%	0%	8%	17%	75%
4th MISG	65	4.75 ^a	0%	2%	3%	14%	82%
95th CAB	50	4.72 ^{ab}	0%	2%	6%	10%	82%
1st SFG	30	4.20 ^b	3%	7%	13%	20%	57%
3rd SFG	23	4.57 ^{ab}	0%	4%	0%	30%	65%
5th SFG	7	3.71 ^b	14%	14%	0%	29%	43%
7th SFG	64	4.80 ^a	0%	0%	5%	11%	84%
10th SFG	40	4.60 ^{ab}	3%	0%	3%	25%	70%
20th SFG	6	4.83 ^{ab}	0%	0%	0%	17%	83%

Note. 19th SFG was excluded due to small sample size ($n = 3$). USASOC unit subgroups sharing the same letter (e.g., a or b) did not report significantly different importance perceptions. Subgroups NOT sharing the same letter did report significantly different importance perceptions. Please refer to the mean to determine which group provided higher importance ratings. Importance scale: 1 = Not Important, 2 = Slightly Important, 3 = Moderately Important, 4 = Important, 5 = Very Important.

Appendix E, Table 5. Correlations between the Importance of Language-related Tasks to Importance of Interpreter to Mission Success

Task	Inside AOR	Outside AOR
Listen to conversations	-.001	.118*
Discrete eavesdropping	.054	.126*
Make informal greetings	-.008	.210*
Listen to the radio	.045	.157*
Use street dialects	.061	.149*
Write lists	.094*	.120*
Make formal greetings	.007	.216*
Conduct business negotiations	.018	.217*
Train others	.090	.169*
Increase situational awareness	.061	.203*
Read signs	.094*	.185*
Build rapport	.082	.240*
Give commands	.116*	.206*
Read to identify documents	.104*	.228*
Maintaining control in hostile situations	.084	.255*
Using military-technical vocabulary	.154*	.189*
Persuading people	.121*	.248*

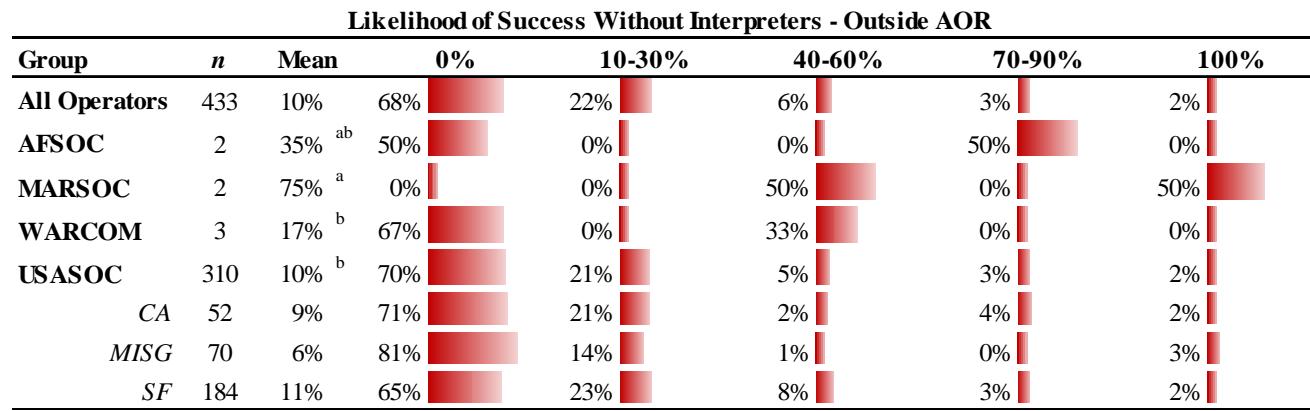
Note. Correlation values with asterisks (*) were significant ($p < .05$).

Appendix E, Table 6. Likelihood of Success without Interpreters Inside the AOR by Component and Army SOF Type

Likelihood of Success Without Interpreters - Inside AOR							
Group	<i>n</i>	Mean Percent	0%	10-30%	40-60%	70-90%	100%
All Operators	466	21%	44%	32%	15%	6%	3%
AFSOC	6	18%	33%	50%	17%	0%	0%
MARSOC	8	14%	38%	50%	13%	0%	0%
WARCOM	5	14%	60%	20%	20%	0%	0%
USASOC	348	21%	44%	32%	16%	6%	3%
CA	52	24%	50%	23%	14%	6%	8%
MISG	53	16%	53%	28%	13%	4%	2%
SF	239	21%	41%	34%	17%	6%	2%

Note. SOF operators currently assigned to USSOCOM HQ, JSOC, TSOC, or Deployed SO Unit were included in the 'All Operators' category, however, were not independently broken out due to small sample sizes. No subgroup differences between components or Army SOF type were found. Likelihood scale ranged from 1 = 0% Likely to 11 = 100% Likely.

Appendix E, Table 7. Likelihood of Success without Interpreters Outside the AOR by Component and Army SOF Type



Note. SOF operators currently assigned to USSOCOM HQ, JSOC, TSOC, or Deployed SOU were included in the 'All Operators' category, however, were not independently broken out due to small sample sizes. No differences were found between Army SOF type subgroups. Components sharing the same letter (e.g., a or b) did not report significantly different likelihood perceptions. Components NOT sharing the same letter did report significantly different likelihood perceptions. Please refer to the mean to determine which component provided higher likelihood ratings. Likelihood scale ranged from 1 = 0% Likely to 11 = 100% Likely.

Appendix E, Table 8. Likelihood of Success without an Interpreter Inside the AOR by USASOC Unit

Likelihood of Success Without Interpreters - Inside AOR							
Group	n	Mean	0%	10-30%	40-60%	70-90%	100%
USASOC Overall	348	21%	44%	32%	16%	6%	3%
SWCS-Staff	13	18%	46%	31%	23%	0%	0%
4th MSG	51	16%	53%	29%	12%	4%	2%
95th CAB	49	24%	51%	20%	14%	6%	8%
1st SFG	25	25%	32%	32%	28%	8%	0%
3rd SFG	55	13%	60%	25%	13%	0%	2%
5th SFG	125	24%	31%	41%	17%	9%	2%
10th SFG	16	14%	50%	31%	19%	0%	0%

Note. 7th (n = 2), 19th (n = 4), and 20th (n = 1) SFG were excluded due to small sample sizes. There were no differences in likelihood perceptions between USASOC unit subgroups. The *Mean* represents the mean percentage of likelihood success without interpreters. Likelihood scale ranged from 0% *Likely* to 100% *Likely*.

Appendix E, Table 9. Likelihood of Success without an Interpreter Outside the AOR by USASOC Unit

Likelihood of Success Without an Interpreter - Outside AOR							
Group	n	Percentage	Mean				
			0% Likely	10 - 30%	40 - 60%	70 - 90%	100% Likely
USASOC Overall	310	10%	70%	21%	5%	3%	2%
SWCS-Staff	12	2% ^b	92%	8%	0%	0%	0%
4th MISG	66	6% ^b	80%	15%	2%	0%	3%
95th CAB	51	9% ^b	71%	22%	2%	4%	2%
1st SFG	30	26% ^a	37%	33%	13%	7%	10%
3rd SFG	23	12% ^{ab}	65%	22%	4%	9%	0%
5th SFG	7	19% ^{ab}	71%	0%	14%	14%	0%
7th SFG	63	6% ^b	75%	21%	3%	2%	0%
10th SFG	39	9% ^b	67%	23%	10%	0%	0%
20th SFG	6	17% ^{ab}	50%	17%	33%	0%	0%

Note. 19th SFG was excluded due to small sample size ($n = 3$). USASOC unit subgroups sharing the same letter (e.g., a or b) did not report significantly different likelihood perceptions. Subgroups NOT sharing the same letter did report significantly different likelihood perceptions. Please refer to the mean likelihood percentage to determine which group provided higher likelihood ratings. Likelihood scale ranged from 0% Likely to 100% Likely.